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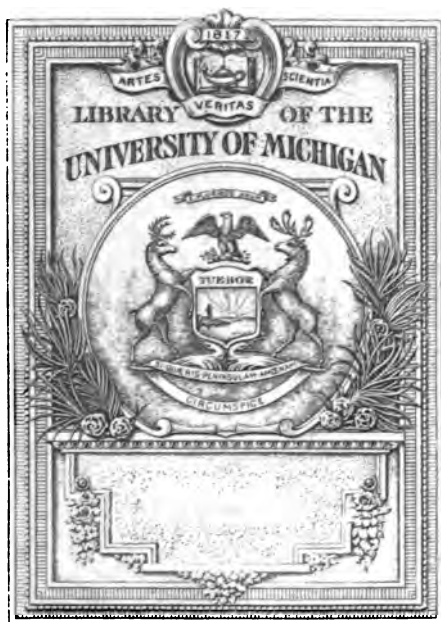
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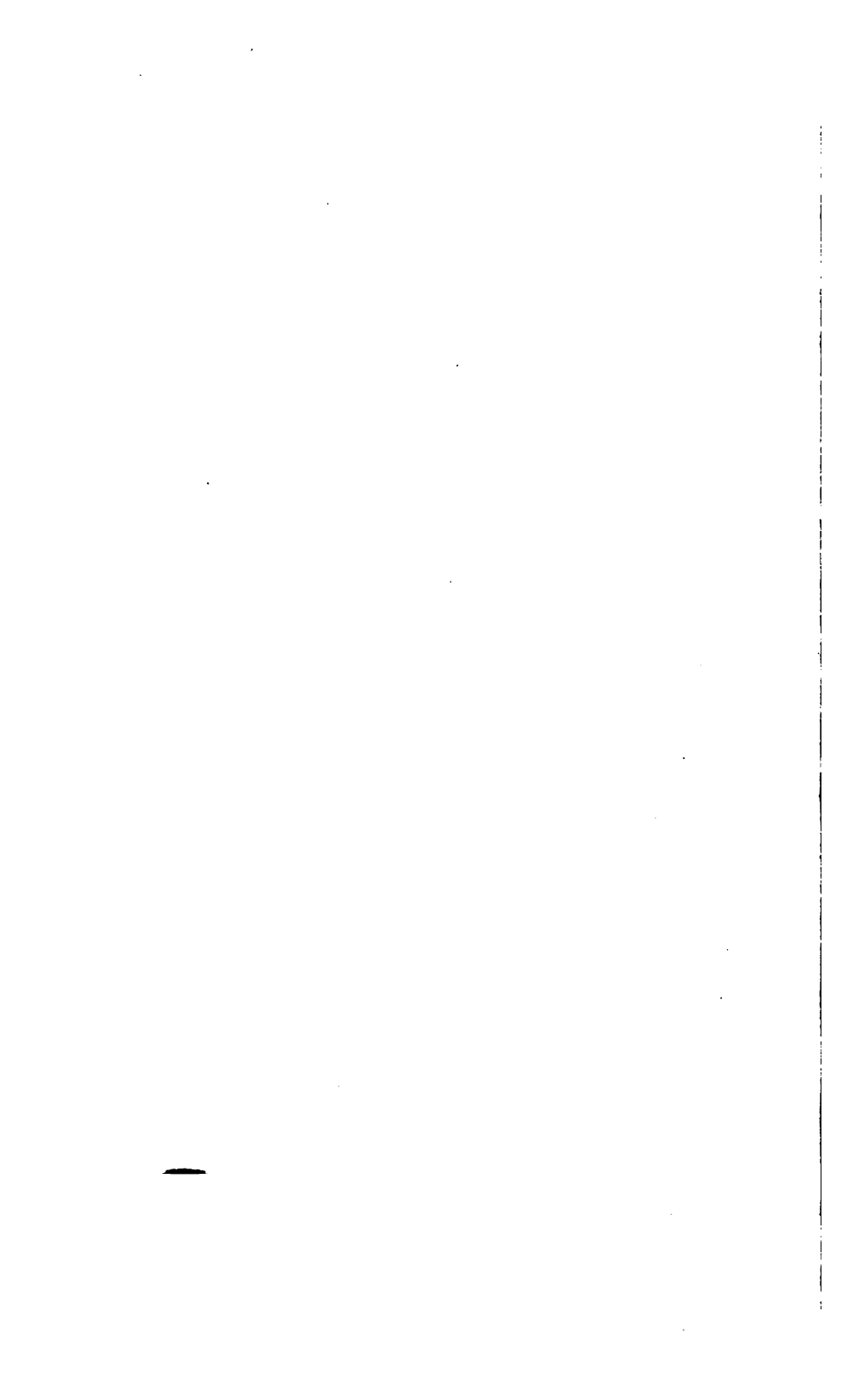
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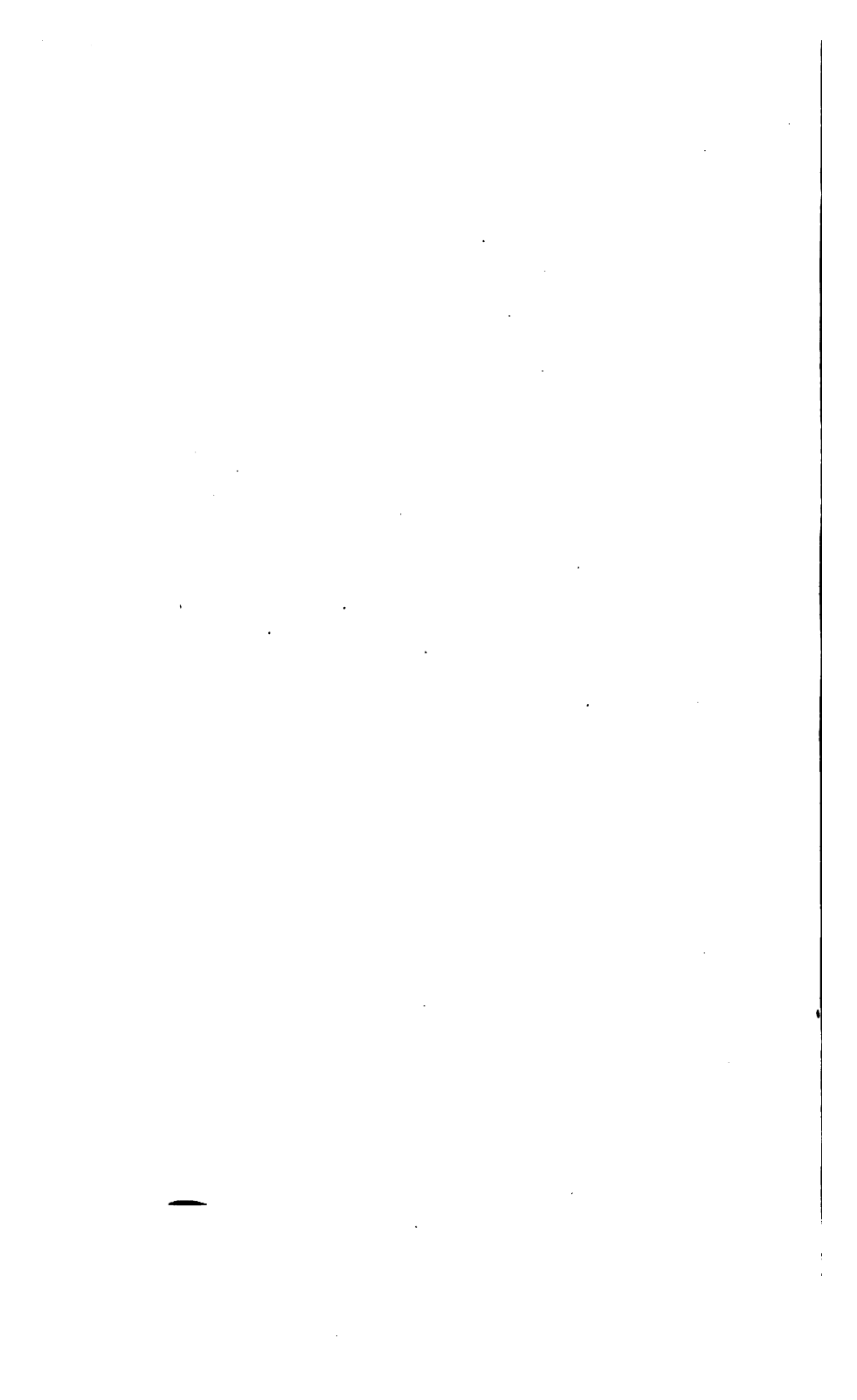
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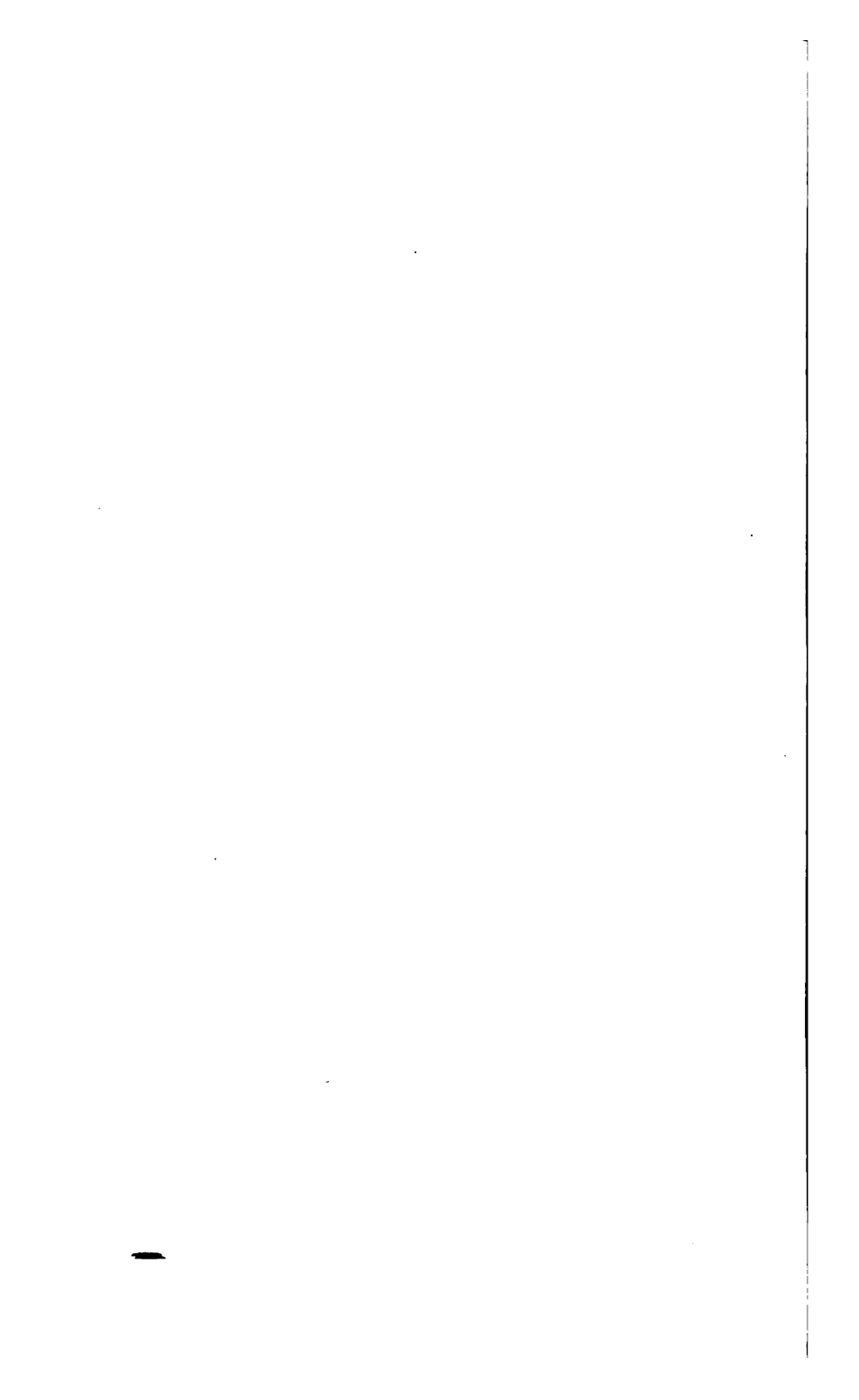




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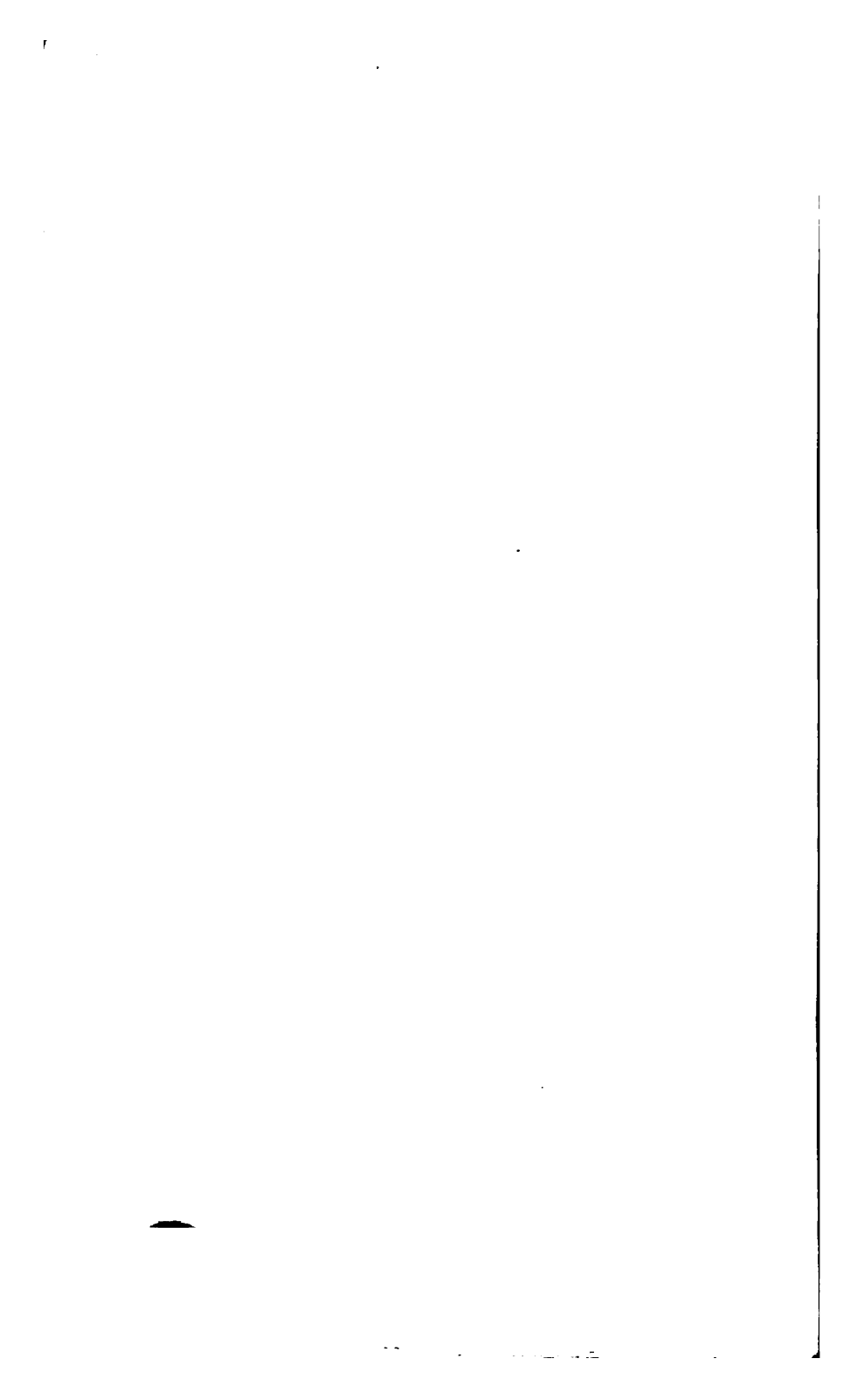
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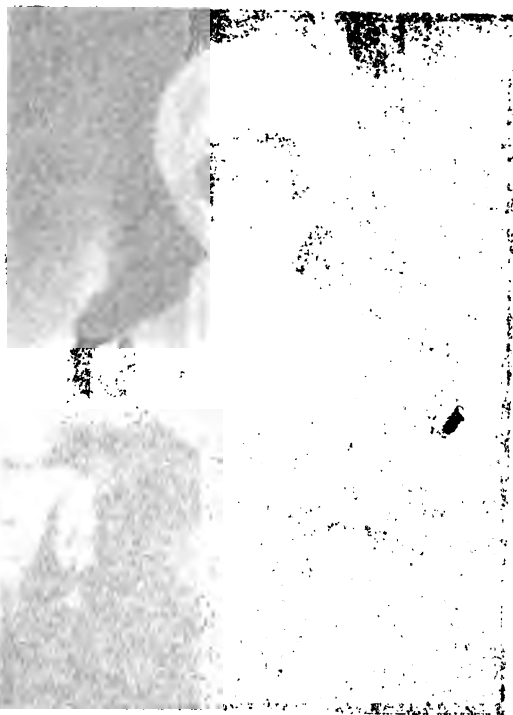
IN SIX VOLUMES

VOL. I.

MARRIAGE

VOL. I.





THE
NOVELS OF
SUSAN EDMONSTONE
FERRIER.

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IN · SIX · VOLUMES ·

MARRIAGE

VOL · I

· WITH · INTRODUCTION · BY · R ·
BRIMLEY JOHNSON · & · ILLUSTRATIONS
BY · NELLY · ERICHSEN ·

IN · RECTE · DECUS ·

LONDON · 1894

· PUBLISHED BY J.M. DENT & CO. ·

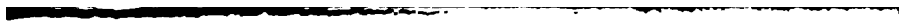
ALDINE HOUSE · G^o EASTERN ST. E.C.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

PORTRAIT OF MISS FERRIER . . . *Frontispiece*

SHE LEANT HER CHEEK AGAINST THE BACK
OF A CHAIR, AND GAVE WAY TO THE
ANGUISH WHICH MOCKED CONTROL . PAGE 15

THE ARRIVAL OF LADY MACLAUCHLAN . „ 45



1



THOUGH written in 1810, *Marriage* was considerably revised, and did not come out till 1818.

Blackwood paid Miss Ferrier £150, and the success of her novel was so decided that in 1824 he was willing to give £1000 for *The Inheritance*. Scott undertook the financing of *Destiny*, which was dedicated to him, and secured £1700 from Cadell for it in 1831.

Miss Ferrier afterwards sold her copyrights to Mr Richard Bentley, who brought out an edition in 1841, illustrated with a frontispiece and vignette to each novel (J. Cause pinxt. W. Greatbatch sc.),* which was reprinted, for the first time with the author's name, in 1851. He also published a library edition (1881, 1882), which was reprinted from the first editions, and contained a "Memoir" † with Miss Ferrier's *Recollections of visits to Asbestiel House and Abbotsford*. *Marriage* was translated into French, and *The Inheritance* was dramatised, but it had only a very short run at Covent Garden.

The text of the 1841 edition was revised by the authoress, and has therefore been adopted in the present reprint.

The frontispiece is from a miniature by Thorburn, which was taken in 1836, at the age of fifty-two. Miss Ferrier, however, told the artist to paint her as if she were thirty years younger, and he seems to have con-

* These illustrations were rather caricatures, and Miss Ferrier never liked them.

† Reprinted from *Temple Bar*, and written, I believe, by Mr John Ferrier, great-nephew of Miss Ferrier and of Professor John Wilson.

scientiously made the attempt. It was twice injured and touched up by inferior hands but, in its present condition, is said to be an admirable likeness, though Miss Ferrier never cared for it herself. She was Thorburn's first patron, and doubtless assisted in his advancement. In 1836 she wrote to her sister, Mrs Kinlock, "I have taken much to a young artist and must bespeak your patronage for him also. He is from Dumfries, has been studying here this three years, is not yet eighteen, and is going to push his fortune in London. I think him a prodigy of genius, though quite a simple Scotch laddie, and as artless and unpretending as a child. Better judges than I think much of his talents, and a few years most likely will see him at the top of his profession—he has so much taste and feeling." The miniature is now in the possession of Mrs Tennent, Miss Ferrier's niece, who has kindly given me permission to have it reproduced. The bust, which was taken after death, is in the possession of Mrs Ferrier of Fulford, and has been reproduced, with her kind permission, from a photograph belonging to Mr John Ferrier.

For information on these matters, and for many personal impressions, I am indebted to Mr John Ferrier, who has most generously put at my disposal the manuscripts and anecdotes which he has been for many years collecting. The letters, here printed, have been selected from his collection of originals and copies, which includes twenty-eight to Miss Clavering, forty-eight to Mrs Connell, one to Lady Charlotte Bury,* and a few others. Those remaining are either family letters of no general interest, or quasi-humorous effusions of an inferior kind. Her style of wit is always the same, and becomes wearisome by too much repetition. R. B. J.

* The only one hitherto printed, except those in the "Memoir." It appeared in the *Diary Illustrative of the Times of George the IVth.*, by Lady C. B. and Miss Sheridan.



SUSAN EDMONSTONE FERRIER.

N^O more than the barest outlines of Miss Ferrier's life are on record, and, despite her intimacy with men of note, the gaps cannot be filled in from other memoirs. We learn that, as a child, she had a great power of mimicry, and in the diary of Sir W. Scott, that repertoire of generous testimonials, she is described as "a gifted personage, having, besides her great talents, conversation the least *exigante*, of any female author at least, whom I have ever seen among the long list I have encountered; simple, full of humour, and exceedingly ready at repartee, and all this without the least affectation of the blue-stocking."

There is a charming anecdote of her in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, which is the more valuable as the only personal reminiscence hitherto printed.

During her last visit to Abbotsford, Scott

"would begin a story as gaily as ever, and go on, in spite of the hesitation in his speech, to tell it with highly picturesque effect; but before he reached the point, it would seem as if some internal spring had given way. He paused and gazed round him with the blank anxiety of look that a blind man has when he has dropped his staff. Unthinking friends sometimes gave him the catch-word abruptly. I noticed the delicacy of Miss Ferrier on such occasions . . . she affected to be troubled with deafness, and would say, 'Well, I am getting as dull as a post, I have not heard a word since so and so,' being sure to mention a circumstance behind that at which he had really halted. He then took up the thread with his

habitual smile of courtesy, as if forgetting his case entirely in the consideration of the lady's infirmity."

Miss Ferrier could treat old age with tact and sympathy, but she seems to have been little in touch with her host's real character. The following description and comment is very typical of her attitude towards life in general :—

"Every day Sir Walter was ready by one o'clock to accompany us either in driving or walking, often in both, and in either there was the same inexhaustible flow of legendary lore, romantic incident, apt quotation, curious or diverting story; and sometimes old ballads were recited, commemorative of some of the localities through which he passed. Those who had seen him only amidst the ordinary avocations of life, or even doing the honours of his own table, could scarcely have conceived the fire and animation of his countenance at such times, when his eyes seemed literally to kindle, and even (as some one has remarked) to change their colour and become a sort of deep sapphire blue. . . . Yet I must confess this was an enthusiasm I found as little infectious as that of his antiquarianism. *On the contrary, I often wished his noble faculties had been exercised on loftier themes than those which seemed to stir his very soul.*" *

There are, indeed, some signs of priggishness and pedantry in her novels, for the literary conversations of her heroes and heroines are as self-conscious as, though less amusing than, the inanities which she has satirised at Mrs Bluemit's tea-party. But she was a citizen of "the modern Athens," and breathed an atmosphere of preciosity in which she learnt to speak of her friends as—"The Wizard of the North," "The Man of Feeling," "The Ploughman Poet," "The Monk," or "Crusty Christopher;" and of her own nephew as "the last of the metaphysicians."

Miss Ferrier was born in Edinburgh, Sep. 7, 1782, being the youngest daughter of James Ferrier, Writer

* From the extremely dull "Recollections" of her two visits to Scott, formerly mentioned.

to the Signet, who was a friend and colleague, as Principal Clerk of the Session, of Sir Walter Scott. He was also agent for the Argyll estates, and is several times alluded to in Scott's Journal :

Jan. 19, 1827. "Uncle Adam,* *vide Inheritance*, who retired last year from an official situation at the age of eighty-four, although subject to fits of giddiness, and although carefully watched by his accomplished daughter, is still in the habit of walking by himself if he can by possibility make an escape. The other day, in one of these excursions, he fell against a lamp-post, cut himself much, bled a good deal, and was carried home by two gentlemen. What said old Rugged-and-Tough ? Why, that his fall against the post was the luckiest thing could have befallen him, for the bleeding was exactly the remedy for his disorder.

Lo ! stout hearts of men ! "

He died in 1829, and Scott wrote, "Honest old Mr Ferrier is dead, at extreme old age. I confess I should not wish to live so long. He was a man with strong passions and strong prejudices, but with generous and manly sentiments at the same time." He married a Miss Coutts, the beautiful daughter of a farmer at Gordon, near Montrose, and had ten children, of whom the eldest married Miss Wilson, the sister of Christopher North.

Miss Ferrier herself is said to have been a plain woman, and rather sensitive of the fact ; but she was proud of her very pretty feet. She was above the average height, with abundant dark hair, rather high colour, and a prominent white forehead. Lady Richardson wrote of her to Mr John Ferrier :—"I never was so much struck as in her with the power of the forehead to express what was passing in the mind. In general we see it only as a part of the general aspect, and although in intellectual and good people it usually

* This character in Miss Ferrier's *The Inheritance* is drawn from James Ferrier.

asserts its power, in Miss Ferrier it was the only part of the face you saw, as she could not bear any light near her; the forehead was clear and white, although not very wide; but it had wonderful power when she spoke or listened in expressing amusement and the coming fun." As may be seen from the miniature, her mouth was not good, and she had very high cheek-bones.

Her good taste in dress and the liveliness of her conversation, however, enabled her to make a good figure in the society she frequented, and she was rather a popular young lady. Dr John Leyden, the Oriental scholar and poet, is said to have proposed to her. She moved in the best literary circles of Edinburgh, and stayed occasionally in London,* but her ideas of fashionable society were mostly acquired at Inveraray Castle and Rosneath, the homes of her father's patron, John, fifth Duke of Argyll, his lovely Duchess, Elizabeth Gunning, and their daughter, Lady Charlotte Bury. She must have gained some hints, too, from the gossiping letters of her great friend Miss Clavering,† the Duke's niece, who was consulted in all her work, who wrote "The History of Mrs Douglas" in *Marriage* (under the influence of certain chapters in Miss Burney's *Cecilia*), and who often visited the southern metropolis.

Miss Ferrier's health was always bad, and she suffered a great deal from her eyes,‡ which may have

* Her last visit was in 1830 to an oculist, who was not able to do her any good. She then spent a few days at Lord Cassilis' villa in Isleworth, the original of "Woodlands" in *Destiny*.

† Daughter of Lady Augusta Clavering, who afterwards married Mr Miles Fletcher, but is better known, perhaps, as Mrs Christison.

‡ It does not seem unlikely that she injured her eyes by drawing and painting, of which she was very fond. Mr Ferrier showed me an interesting coloured view of the Highlands, executed at the age of thirteen, and a most carefully shaded tree, done with the pencil, and dated 1800.

accounted in part for her harshness and general oddity. I am told that visitors could never depend upon receiving any notice from Miss Ferrier, when "she was in one of her moods," and there were many against whom she had a permanent prejudice. These characteristics belong, in all probability, to her later years, when she became very religious and regretted the composition of her novels. In those days, having retained her sense of humour and powers of repartee, she was a very formidable personage, and much dreaded by her younger relations. A niece, who sometimes lived with her, was compelled to find a bed elsewhere if she wished to go to a ball or any other evening entertainment, as Miss Ferrier would not have her household arrangements disturbed on such a frivolous pretext.*

She was always much respected, though rather feared, and apparently spent the greater part of her fortune in charity. The fame of her novels brought many strangers to visit her, but she "could not bear the *fuss* of authorism," and steadily refused to be lionised. For many years she devoted herself almost exclusively to her father, for whom she had the strongest affection, and she became really necessary to his comfort. She was obliged to refuse invitations, even from Miss Clavering:—

"I am doomed to doze away my days," she writes, "by the side of my solitary fire, and to spend my nights in the tender intercourse of all the old tabbies in the town! In truth, your solitude is not a whit greater than mine, unless you reckon *round* society; of that I own I have enough—but somehow I don't feel my spirits a bit exhilarated, my ideas at all enlivened, or my understanding enlightened by the rattling of carriages or

* It was in a gentler mood that she said to her sister, "Catherine, I don't know how it is that so many gentlemen come about you. I never see a man, unless, perhaps, the minister, the doctor, and occasionally a glazier."

the clanking of chairs, and these be the only mortal sounds that meet my ears. As to conversation, that's quite out of the question at this season. In the dull summer months people may find time to sit down and prose and talk sense a little, but at present they've something else to do with their time.

"My father I never see save at meals, but then my company is just as indispensable as the table cloth or chair, or, in short, any other *luxury* which custom has converted into necessity. That he could *live* without me I make no doubt, so he could without a leg or an arm, but it would ill become me to deprive him of either; therefore, never even for a single day could I reconcile it either to my duty or inclination to leave him."

She lived for twenty-five years after his death, settling gradually into more complete retirement, and died in 1854 at Edinburgh, having survived the greater number of her friends.

Miss Ferrier wrote *Marriage* about 1810, at the age of twenty-eight, and the other novels were ready for publication in 1824 and 1831 respectively. She was frequently urged to publish again, and made "two attempts to write *something* else, but could not please herself, and would not publish *anything*." This simple and unhesitating decision certainly indicates a strength of mind and a restraint as admirable as it is rare, and shows that she had some knowledge of her own powers and limitations. In fact, she depended so largely upon deliberate portraiture, that, in a life of limited experience, her stock of models must soon have become exhausted.

Marriage contains a series of such portraits or caricatures, with slight connecting incidents. In *The Inheritance*, as Mr Saintsbury puts it,* "the excellent studies of character are bound together with a very respectable cement of narrative," and in *Destiny*, the technique is still better, though the book is overladen with moralising, and contains fewer striking "originals."

It was to Miss Clavering that she confided her aims.

* Miss Ferrier's novels, *The Fortnightly Review*, March 1882.

The two ladies had some idea of working together, and Miss Ferrier's collaborator, it seems, had suggested a plot which "wanted a moral."

"Now," she writes, "I don't think, like all penny-book manufacturers, that 'tis absolutely necessary that the good boys and girls should be rewarded, and the naughty ones punished. Yet, I think, where there is much tribulation, 'tis fitter it should be the *consequence*, rather than the *cause*, of misconduct or frailty. You'll say that rule is absurd, inasmuch as it is not observed in human life. That I allow; but we know the inflictions of Providence are for wise purposes, therefore our reason willingly submits to them. But, as the only good purpose of a book is to inculcate morality, and convey some lesson of instruction as well as delight, I do not see that what is called a *good moral* can be dispensed with in a work of fiction. . . . I do not recollect ever to have seen the sudden transition of a high-bred English beauty, who thinks she can sacrifice all for love, to an uncomfortable, solitary, Highland dwelling, among tall, red-haired sisters and grim-faced aunts. Don't you think this would make a good opening of the piece? Suppose each of us try our hands on it; the moral to be deduced from that is to warn all young ladies against runaway matches, and the character and fate of the two sisters would be *unexceptionable*. I expect it will be the first book every wise matron will put into the hand of her daughter, and even the reviewers will relax of their severity in favour of the morality of this little work. Enchanting sight! already do I behold myself arrayed in an old mouldy covering, thumbed and creased and filled with dogs' ears. I hear the enchanting sound of some sentimental miss, the shrill pipe of some antiquated spinster, or the hoarse grumbling of some incensed dowager as they severally enquire for me at the circulating library, and are assured by the master that 'tis in such demand that, though he has thirteen copies, they are insufficient to answer the calls upon it, but that each of them may depend upon having the very first that comes in!!!"

The programme here sketched was carried out by Miss Ferrier with tolerable exactness. Her moral reflections, though trite and conventional, are very sound; and she composes her plots on mechanical

lines, which depend, for the most part, upon startling associations of rough Highlanders with the most *recherché* fashionables. Some elegant slave of passion longs to fly with her Henry to the desert—"a beautiful place, full of roses and myrtles, and smooth, green turf, and murmuring rivulets, and, though very retired, not absolutely out of the world; where one could occasionally see one's friends, and give *dejeunés et fêtes champêtres*." Scotch mists and mountain blasts dispel the fancy picture and, after a brief period of acute wretchedness, the really heartless victim of a so-called love-match becomes the zealous promoter of mercenary connections.

In the next generation this process is reversed and, indeed, as Lady Emily remarks, "Love is a passion that has been much talked of, often described, and little understood. Cupid has many counterfeits going about the world, who pass very well with those whose minds are capable of passion, but not of love. These Birmingham Cupids have many votaries amongst boarding-school misses, militia officers, and milliners' apprentices, who marry upon the mutual faith of blue eyes and scarlet coats; have dirty houses and squalling children, and hate each other most delectably. Then there is another species for more refined souls, which owes its birth to the works of Rousseau, Goethe, Cottin, &c. Its success depends very much upon rocks, woods, and waterfalls; and it generally ends in daggers, pistols, poison, or Doctors' Commons."

This is not, however, the experience of the heroine proper, who is "religious—what mind of any excellence is not? but hers is the religion of poetry, of but taste, of feeling, of impulse, of any and everything Christianity. He" [that is, the priggish hero] "saw much of fine natural feeling, but in vain sought for any guiding principle of duty. Her mind seemed as a

lovely, flowery, pathless waste, whose sweets exhaled in vain; all was graceful luxuriance, but all was transient and perishable in its loveliness. No plant of immortal growth grew there, no 'flowers worthy of Paradise.'"

This ill-regulated and romantic young lady naturally falls in love with the handsome villain,—“There might, perhaps, be something of *bouteur* in his lofty bearing; but it was so qualified by the sportive gaiety of his manners, that it seemed nothing more than that elegant and graceful sense of his own superiority, to which, even without arrogance, he could not be insensible.”

Clearly this Adonis must be unmasked before she can recognise the solid worth of the hero; but it is gratifying to observe that the eligible *parti*, the heir for whom she is designed by her friends, had no chance with her from the beginning.

Miss Ferrier makes use of these common-place types in all her books, and a somewhat common-place melodrama controls their fate. The story of *The Inheritor* depends for its dénouement upon the impossible Yankee Lewiston, a school-girl's brigand; and the central moment of *Destiny* is a morbid scene in which “the young man, supposed to have been lost at sea, revisits, after a lapse of time, the precincts of his own home, watching, unseen, in the twilight the occupations and bearings of the different members of the family, and resolving, under the influence of a most generous feeling, to keep the secret of his preservation.”*

However, as Christopher North truly says in the *Noctes* :—

“These novels have one feature of true and melancholy interest quite peculiar to themselves. It is in them alone that the ultimate breaking-down and debasement of the Highland

* This description is quoted from the *Noctes*, where, it is only fair to add, the passage is called “beautiful” and “pathetic.”

character has been depicted. Sir Walter Scott had fixed the enamel of genius over the last fitful flames of their half-savage chivalry, but a humbler and sadder scene—the age of lucre-banished clans—of chieftains dwindled into imitation squires, and of chiefs content to barter the recollections of a thousand years for a few gaudy seasons of Almacks and Crockfords, the euthanasia of kilted aldermen and steam-boat pibrochs was reserved for Miss Ferrier.”

She probably chose these subjects from personal inclination, but the practice was exactly in accordance with her principles. She writes to Miss Clavering:—“You may laugh at the idea of its being at all necessary for the writer of a romance to be versed in the history, natural and political, the modes, manners, customs, &c., of the country where its bold and wanton freaks are to be played; but I consider it most essentially so, as nothing disgusts even an ordinary reader more than a discovery of the ignorance of the author, who is pretending to instruct and amuse him.”

Even in those their most degenerate days the Highlanders were picturesque, and we have it on the authority of the Ladies Elizabeth and Juliana that they were “in fashion.”* While Miss Ferrier was writing, John Galt (author of *The Entail*, *The Provost*, &c.) published a number of clever novels, containing most carefully-drawn miniatures of Scotch life, from which she may have borrowed various incidents and characters; and we learn from “*The Memoir*” that she has taken off several of her own acquaintances. Lady Maclaughlan’s dress, it seems, was first worn by Mrs Damur, the lady sculptor, and her manners were those of Lady Frederick Campbell, widow of Earl Ferrers. Some old family friends, the Misses Edmonstone, sat for the aunts in *Marriage*; Mrs MacShake was a Mrs Davidson, sister to Lord Braxfield; and Mrs Fox was

* As they are still, apparently, since “*Society*” on the stage will condescend even now to don the kilt.

Mary, Lady Clerk, a well-known Edinburgh character. Uncle Adam was drawn to a great extent from her own father, who was sometimes alluded to by that name.

She always refused to disclose the original of Miss Pratt, though admitting that such an one existed, and she was sometimes afraid of being discovered. "I am boiling to hear from you," she writes to Miss Clavering; "but I've taken a sudden remorse about Lady Maclaughlan and her friends; if I was ever to be detected, or even suspected, I would have nothing for it but to drown myself. . . . As to the misses, if ever it was to be published, they must be altered, or I must fly our native land." The following letter to Mrs Connell shows that some of her friends were rather in haste to recognise themselves:—

"I am very glad you all liked *The Inheritance* so much, it seems to have been wonderfully successful; but both Sir Walter and Mr Mackenzie took it by the hand at the very first, which of course gave it a lift, nevertheless the author will not confess nor allow any of her friends to do it for her. *Everybody* knows who the characters are, but no two people can agree about them. I have heard of five or six Lord Ross-villes, and as many Miss Pratts, and Lady John Campbell signs herself Mrs Major Waddell, on account of her care of her husband, which she says is her to the very life. In short, whenever characters are at all natural they are immediately set down as being *personal*, which is a *grievance*."

Miss Ferrier puts on her local colour effectively, for her descriptive powers are lively, and she has a dry caustic kind of wit. She says somewhere that "perhaps, after all, the only uncloying pleasure in life is that of fault-finding," and she was seldom inclined to deny herself this gratification. Her satire is at times heavy or even coarse:—

"Here Miss M'Dow was disencumbered of her pelisse and bonnet, and exhibited a coarse, blubber-lipped, sun-burnt visage,

with staring sea-green eyes, a quantity of rough sandy hair, and mulatto neck, with merely a rim of white round the shoulders. . . . The gloves were then taken off, and a pair of thick mulberry paws set at liberty."

In this instance, indeed, it is positively repulsive.

Miss Ferrier's observation was shrewd and keen so far as it went but, except perhaps in the creation of that good soul Molly Macaulay, it was not sympathetic, and seldom pierced below the surface. Like Fanny Burney's, her genius delighted in the exhibition of humours, and her claim to notice rests chiefly on her "gallery of originals, her museum of abnormalities."

Probably the best known of all Miss Ferrier's oddities are the three Scotch aunts (Jacky, Grizzy, and Nicky) in *Marriage*, and they are by no means unworthy of the distinction. As exemplars of the disagreeable virtues and the petty conventions they stand alone, and their epistles to Mary Douglas are masterpieces of inconsequent garrulity. As a rule it is impossible to think of them apart, but the sapient Grizzy becomes finally differentiated from her sisters when she follows the rest of the company to Bath.

The aunts are great theorists on the education of the young and other matters of domestic economy, but their opinions have all been learned from one oracle, the redoubtable Lady Maclaughlan, who has a genius for incivility worthy of Lady Catherine in *Pride and Prejudice*, and expects to be thought infallible by all those in whom she condescends to take an interest.

The English aristocracy, on the other hand, is most favourably represented by Lady Emily, who has the charming naughtiness, the kittenlike vivacity of Lady G. in *Sir Charles Grandison*, and, like her, combines a pretty unsteadiness of principle with a loyal and loving heart. She is an excellent tonic to Mary, the demure,

and introduces her to some notable acquaintance in the "house of mourning."

The most important "character" in *The Inheritance* whom we venture to notice *before* the Earl of Rossville, has a certain resemblance to one of Miss Austen's creations. The inimitable Miss Pratt talks as incessantly as Miss Bates; she is obtuse, inconsequent, and full of gossip. Her Anthony Whyte is as immaculate and as clever as the other's Jane Fairfax. But she is not entirely an imitation, for whereas Miss Bates is the soul of good nature, Miss Pratt is caustic as vinegar, and delights in nothing so much as in making mischief. She achieves one temporary conquest, by her knowledge of "stocks," over uncle Adam, a man whose character is the very antipodes of hers. He is the typical cross old gentleman of fiction, who never opens his lips if he can help it, and hates to have anyone about him. His heart, however, is of course in the right place, and he finally becomes softened and humanised by the heroine's resemblance to his first and only love. In externals, as we have seen, he was copied from Miss Ferrier's father, and the type reappears as Inch-Orran in *Destiny*. His secret and shamefaced delight in *Guy Mannering* is cleverly described, and conveys a graceful compliment to the author's friend and compatriot.

The pet aversion of uncle Adam is Bell Black, the pretty fool on whom Miss Ferrier expends the whole force of her cynical artillery. She is for ever prattling of "her situation," as *fiancée* of a wealthy nabob, Major Waddell, and fondly imagines that no one else can be an object of attention in her presence. The sentimental Lilly Black, though quite a minor character, belongs to much the same type, but has an individuality of her own.

A characteristic of *The Inheritance* is the delicate

gradation of *beaux* which might almost have been conceived by the authoress of *Evelina*. The elegant Sir Reginald is not in reality so refined as Lyndsay, for his *buteur* is too overbearing; and Major Waddell despises the graces of Mr Augustus Larkins and the two Blacks. The former, indeed, by his intimacy with the town lions and vulgar knowingness, reminds one forcibly of Mr Smith in *Evelina*, though in person the eighteenth century gallant must have been more attractive. Mr Smith's eyes were probably dark, and his bearing melancholy, whereas Mr Larkins has "regular features, very pink eyes, very black eyebrows, and what was intended for a very smart expression." Bob and Davy Black, again, are

"dressed in all the extremes of the reigning fashions—small waists, brush-heads, stiff collars, iron heels, and switches. Like many other youths they were distinctly of opinion that 'dress makes the man.' . . . Perhaps, after all, that is a species of humility rather to be admired in those who, feeling themselves destitute of mental qualifications, trust to the abilities of their tailor and hairdresser for gaining them the goodwill of the world."

An interesting treatise on *manners* might be composed from Miss Ferrier's novels, for she shows considerable ingenuity in the differentiation of the fine shades. The *nonbalance* of Lord Lindore forms a marked contrast to the brilliance of Sir Reginald, though both are perfectly well-bred; and Mrs St Clair

"was considerably annoyed by the manners of Lady Charles, which made her feel her own as something unwieldy and overgrown; like a long train, they were both out of the way and in the way, and she did not know very well how to dispose of them. Indeed, few things can be more irritating than for those who have hitherto piqued themselves upon the abundance of their manner, to find all at once that they have a great deal too much; that no one is inclined to take it off their hands, and that, in short, it is dead stock."

Mr Saintsbury conjectures that Miss Ferrier had in fact rather a *penchant* for the aristocracy, and she certainly draws her ladies and gentlemen of title from the life. Her heroines, though fully recognising "the vanity of rank and fashion," are wont to betray a partiality for elegant manners and refined conversation.

In *Destiny* the main story is more carefully worked out and the minor characters are, to some extent, kept in their place. It must be admitted that, in consequence, the book is the least interesting of the three. It contains, however, one full-length portrait, ably drawn,—that of the minister, Mr M'Dow. He is a coarser creature than Mr Collins in *Pride and Prejudice*, but he has the same tenacity in the pursuit of personal aggrandisement, and the same invulnerable obtuseness with regard to all other concerns. Himself the prophet of himself, he pesters the whole world with his opinions, and is guilty of what he is pleased to call a joke on every possible occasion. To confess the truth, the merciless realism with which his vulgarity is described becomes tiresome at length, and his case may be quoted, in contradistinction to that of Miss Pratt, as an argument for the contention that a bore in real life is very apt to be a bore in fiction. His "pawtron," Glenroy, who was too great in himself to make a great marriage, is another excellent character, and the Chief's mourning for his dead son is, in our opinion, the only scene of pathos which Miss Ferrier has managed with any success.

There is another indication, however, in *Destiny* that she might have done good serious work. The character of Mrs Macaulay, as we have hinted already, is sympathetically conceived, and is not altogether without subtlety. She is in many ways little better than a fool, but she proves herself under every circumstance to be a real "lady."

In conclusion, it will be obvious that we cannot turn

to Miss Ferrier for a transcript of actual life, a careful picture, like one of Miss Austen's, of scenes which seem almost to have occurred in our own experience. She loved rather to dwell upon, and with a pardonable sense of enjoyment to exaggerate, the freaks of nature, the eccentricities to which humanity is subject. Her methods are practically the same in *Marriage*, in *The Inheritance*, and in *Destiny*. The stories in themselves are in no way impressive, and can with difficulty be retained in the memory; but the minor characters stand out clear and well-defined, they "are persons with whom we are delighted to meet, sorry to part, and certain to meet again." In a word, "they are excellent company."

R. BRIMLEY JOHNSON.



LETTERS.

AS Miss Ferrier seldom dated her letters, it is impossible to arrange them exactly in chronological order.

To Miss Clavering.

I.

TWAS when the seas were roaring
With hollow blasts of wind,
A damsel sat by the fireside poring
Till she was almost blind.

Such is the situation poetical, geographical, atmospheric, intellectual, and optical of the Damsel who now addresses you, and these lines descriptive of her unhappy circumstances may prove no less instructive to posterity than they are interesting to present times. As I find my correspondence is carefully preserved by you, I flatter myself it is with the view of being one day presented to the public in twelve handsome octavo volumes, embellished with a portrait of the Authoress, and enriched with a facsimile of her handwriting. Having this hope before my eyes, I carefully abstain from the vulgar practice of dating my letter, aware how greatly uncertainty adds to interest.

With regard to this letter, my future Biographer will say (for my Life must go along with my head and hand)

it has been found impossible to fix any precise date; all we can ascertain is that it must have been written somewhere in the vicinity of the sea during very tempestuous weather, and we also learn that the Author was much addicted to reading by the fireside (probably with her toes on the fender) and that her sight was materially affected by this unremitting attention to her studies. Of the nature of these studies it would be presumptuous to hazard a guess. We certainly cannot deny what has been alleged that Jack the Giant Killer at this time formed a part of her course of reading, but it is not probable a mind such as our Author's could take much delight in such scenes of rapine and bloodshed.—O me, how wearied I am of walking upon stilts, and how glad I am to get down to my very stocking soles. I only mounted to try and please you, as you are not satisfied with me it seems in my ordinary dimensions. Forgetting how much Time has bent me with his iron hand, you want me to be as tall and as straight as in the days of my prime; alas, my dear Chatty, my mind as well as my body has long been past playing antics, so don't quarrel with me because "sprightly folly no longer wantons in my lines, and dull serenity becalms my page." Nobody ever had less to make them gay that had nothing to make them wretched than I have; if I was thoroughly good I suppose I ought to be excessively happy, but as Waverley says of your country—

"There's nought in the Highlands but sibyls and leeks,
And lang-legged Callants wanting the breeks," &c.

"There's nought to be seen here but mountains and heath,
And lang-backed Lassies wanting the teeth," &c.

N.B.—This is quite matter of fact, except that there is no heath in sight, and the girls have got bran new buck teeth which they are always showing like me, and as I hate to be imitated, I'm going to have all mine

pulled out and a handsome transparency of Mount Vesuvius put in their place. I'm infinitely obliged by your invitation ; this place is quite *bandy* for a trip to Greenock, as there are vessels sailing every day for Liverpool, and from thence I could be at no loss to get myself a berth—but as I have just half-a-crown in the World, I suppose I would have to work my passage—seriously, I can only say I would rather be with you than anywhere I know at present. You may well say we have no comfort in each other in Town, but from the nature of things it cannot be otherwise, as you have your ways and I have mine, but in the Country we could *blend our beings* together and go on vastly well. As to the Chiefs of Glenferri I shall say nothing till you have read it, and then I shall expect a candid opinion from you. I cannot offer to send it to you as I have no copy for myself, but I hope you will contrive to satisfy your curiosity some way or other. I was delighted with your account of Lord John (Campbell). I had had a bad dream about him which made me very apprehensive. I wish he would go and winter in Italy, however, and take you with him to nurse him. If Lady Charlotte comes how enchanting that will be, but I fear nothing but an Earthquake will roll her hitherward. I stood the Quaker very well ; what did you do ? Some Ladies I saw in the Papers were papering their hair at the time. I rather think my curls must have been compleated, but I never could say positively whether I must have been tying my night-cap or buttoning the collar of my night-gown. My brother Walter is away to Holland ; I'm afraid he'll never come back. When we who dwell on Mountain tops can hardly keep our heads above water, what must it be in such Puttock Land ? Not but what I would go to the Antipodes to shift the scene a little and see something strange and new, for truly this side of the world

is become prodigiously *flat*, and I'm very weary, Miss Clavering, and do nothing but send forth Clandestine groans. I'm reading heaps of Books, but they tell nothing but the truth, and I know it already; but if you could send me a batch of lies I should take it very well of you and they would do me a deal of good. They would be like Foxglove to the Dropsy and Arsenic to the Ague. I would try my hand myself, but that I know you are very incredulous and wouldn't believe me though I were to swear that my Father wore a pink silk coat and bagwig, and that I rouged and danced waltzes with my Brother-in-law's black servant. Ah prop oh! [*sic*] did you ever receive my communications on that subject—*i.e.*, waltzing, and was it not as plain as print where they came from? I desire you will write instantly and tell me how you like the latitude and longitude of my lucubrations. I mean to cover this page down to the very ground that you may have no white paper to cast in my teeth. I don't know what to put upon it, but as I began in poetry I scorn to end in prose, so I bid you Adieu as I am going to blow my nose.

II.

I relent, here is a letter for you, so dry your eyes, wipe your nose, and promise to be a good child, and I shall forgive you for this time. I'm sure you must be very sorry for having displeased me, for I know my friendship is the only thing in the World you care about; everything else compared to it is as cold porridge to Turtle soup. Tell me how you have sped in the long night of my silence. Did not the sun appear to you like an old Coal Basket, and the heavens as a wet blanket? was not the moon invisible to your weeping eyes? were not the fields to your distempered fancy

without verdure, and the boughs without blossoms? and did not the birds refuse to sing, and the lambs to dance? did not the wind sometimes seem to sigh and the dogs to howl? All these and a thousand such prodigies I know have appeared to you in the long interval of my silence, but now the spell is broken, and all these fearful visions will vanish; you will see the sun break out as yellow as your hair and the moon shine as white as your hand; the fields will grow as green as grass in December, and the Birds will dance Waltzes all the way before you from the Post Office; you will taste of five more dishes at dinner to testify your joy, and you will toss off an additional glass of Ale in honour of every sentence I shall indite. You would hear how Lady Charlotte* had tarried in this place † ten days, but I got very little good of her. She was so *cherché* and *recherché*. She dined with me one day, however, and had John Wilson to show off with, and there arose a question whether a Woman of a right way of thinking would not rather be stabbed as kicked by her husband (observe this burnt hole, Miss, it is a sure sign that either you or I are going to be married, but keep that to yourself, and excuse this Parenthesis, which, indeed, is rather too long, but I hope you have not such an Antipathy to them as Dean Swift had; he, honest man! could not abide the sight of them, which was certainly a prejudice on his part: for mine, I think there are worse things in the World than Parentheses); but to return to where I was (which, indeed, is not such an easy matter, as I must turn the page to see where I left off: it was at the burnt hole, and here I am just coming upon another which looks as if we were *both* going to be wed. I wonder who it will be to!) I am for a stabber, but I daresay you will be for putting up with a kicker. It was talking of Lord Byron

* Lady Charlotte Campbell. † Edinburgh.

brought on the question. I maintain there is but one crime a woman could never forgive in her husband, and that is a *licking*. Did you ever read anything so exquisite as the new Canto of Childe Harold? It is enough to make a woman fly into the Arms of a Tiger; nothing but a kick could ever have hardened her heart against such genius. . . .

III.

Wednesday Evening.

I am at the greatest possible pains to furnish you with an abridgement of my brain in order to save you double postage when, just as I had finished my letter, my Brother sent me a frank big enough to carry a folio. 'Tis well for you that I did not know of it sooner for, as I'm in a scribbling mood there's no saying where I might have stopped had not the form of sevenpence held my hand. However, I am overflowing with spite, and you need not wonder should my gall shew itself soon on a new sheet of paper. Meantime I charge you on your allegiance herewith to assume the form of a letter and transport yourself into my presence. 'Tis very hard, methinks, that serpents and skeletons should have more of your company than what I have, but I suppose were I a snake or a spectre I'd be prettily courted,—but let me tell you flesh and blood won't bear this as I'm cast off by Lady Charlotte, abandoned by Mamselle La Chaux * and treated with contumely by Miss Clavering, but I'll be revenged of you.—I shall write a Book to which yours shall bear the same proportion as Joe Millar to Mrs Radcliffe. *You* have but one serpent, *I* shall have nine. *Yours* can only speak (which they could do in the days of Adam). *Mine* shall sing and play on the Harp, and Waltz; you measure

* Governess in the family of Lady Charlotte Campbell.

out blood (like Laudanum) in drops, but I shall dispense it like the shower bath! I—but I shall say no more lest you burst with envy at my superior Genius and thereby deprive me of the satisfaction of seeing you pine a slow death at my unrivalled success.

IV.

Sunday Evening, 20th.

Did I not promise you a literary letter? Alas! my hand turns pale and my pen is ready to swoon at the bare mention of such an undertaking! How shall these inexperienced innocents who have never strayed beyond the precincts of Folly, save to peep into the flowery field of Fiction—how shall they ever find their way through the mazes of Literature and Criticism? Will they not be plunged into the bogs of Ignorance, driven against the rocks of Pedantry, or bewildered in the mazes of Error? Will they not have to combat Prejudice, to conquer Partiality, to beware Presumption? Too surely all those dangers beset those Monsters that besiege the paths of science, and unless vanquished at the very entrance seldom fail to make the unwary passenger their prey! Unlike the fabled Dragons of old we cannot bribe them to let us pass unmolested, but rather like the fascinating syrens they charm us to our ruin!!!—There's an exordium for you, that even out-Montagues Montague! The cause of this extraordinary burst of eloquent moralising proceeds solely from that source of the true sublime in letter-writing. I chanced to take up a volume of hers to keep me awake after dinner, and the fancy took me to try whether, without a grain of her talent, I could not write something about nothing as flowery and pedantic as she has done. I admired her letters at first reading, and still think some of them the wittiest that ever were

written—but that everlasting eternal preaching and prosing is execrable in every day letters, don't you think so? . . . I've a mind to enclose you a wee morsel of Lady M'Laughlan, though I think the dinner-scene is carried too far, but I write down everything that Folly suggests at first, and leave it to reason to abridge it afterwards. . . . Your love speech is quite beautiful and eloquent, and must have come from the heart—the head never could produce anything so warm and tender, and I love you all the better for it. My only fault to you is that you've never been in love, but I trust your time is coming, and that you'll live to swell the streams with your tears and shake the trees with your sighs! How I should doat on you as a love-sick maid! I long to see the beauteous Rawdon;* it seems but as yesterday since these aged arms used to hold the crowing babe! Give my Motherly love to him. I suppose he's too big to be kissed now? When do you go to Inveraray? When does the Duke come to it? Who's to be there? How long are you to stay? Is it to be very gay? Have you got in your Hay? Answer me quickly by Yea or by Nay? And don't let it be in the old Way—for I declare I never grudge to Pay. No more will I say, for this is Sunday.

V.

Conheath, July 26th, 1809.

. . . I came to this *naughty* place a few days ago and am leading the life of an *absolute beast*, for I do naught but wander about the fields and eat of the fruits of the earth and drink buttermilk, till I'm become so fat I'm the admiration of all the Cowfeeders in the Parish; by the bye, I expect to rival fat Lambert of

* Rawdon Clavering, her brother. He married Miss Dunbar of Northfield, and was father of Sir Henry Clavering, Bart.

famous memory, or rather to fill his place in the world, and to be wheeled about the country in my caravan with my Trumpeters and Beef-eaters; but even should I arrive at that Celebrity, I promise you I shall always make it a point to pay you a visit gratis. I'm glad you like *Coelebs*—the *Book* I mean, for the *man* is insupportable; he's a good well-meaning creature, to be sure, and is of great use in making a pertinent remark or hitching in a hacknied observation whenever the conversation begins to flag, but farther his merits I could not decry. There is a deal of good sense and truth throughout the whole book, and the Stanley family are delightful upon paper! Have you read Edgworth's *Fashionable Tales*? I like the two first, but none of the others; it is high time all *good Ladies* and *grateful little girls* should be returned to their gilt boards, and as for sentimental weavers and moralising gloves I recommend them as Penny ware for the Pedlar. I lent *Coelebs* to Lord John, who has promised me some marginal notes upon it, which I think will prove a great addition to the next Edition. I can't tell you what the *World's* about, for I'm quite out of it at present, and see nobody but innocent natives and hear nothing but Parish News. For myself, I'm just such another harmless innocent as Mrs Commissary's Monkey, for "I joist play mysel' wi' a windle strae." I hope your *sea Fowls* have taken flight; it must have been a tender squeeze from some of their amphibious fangs that broke my Ring—deny it if you dare. I'm going to commit this to the care of your most Puissant Uncle—it is such another desperate expedient as putting a letter into a Bottle and committing it to the mercy of the waves. I write at the risk of my life, for I'm dying of heat, but the only thing that will revive me will be to hear from you, and that you are well and happy, not "*sick and melancholy*."

VI.

Feb. 1810.

What a glorious vision burst upon my sight! As I behold our Heroine, even the Beauteous Herminsalde, sailing over the salt seas in an old Beer Barrell!!! My dearest of dear Creatures, you must excuse me for having skipped over all the dry land and plumped in, heels over head, into the Water, since really the Barrel is as buoyant in my imagination as erst it was in the Archipelago. Methinks I behold the Count and the Squire *ramming* her in like so much raw sugar, and treading her down as the Negroes do the Figs, to make them pack close! 'Tis no wonder you pride yourself upon your *Invention*; that is truly an incident for which you'll find no parallel in the Annals of Novel Writing! A mere matter-of-fact Writer now, had they really wanted to drown a body, would most likely have tied a good thumping stone about its neck and there would have been an end of it; but your Count knows a trick worth two of that—he either goes to a Cooper and bespeaks a good, stout, water-tight cask (tho', he seems such a scurvy old Knave, I doubt if he'd have been at the expensæ), or he picks up an old rum puncheon belonging to the ship's crew, into which he *crams* his victim, and then (tho' by what means the story does not inform) this said enormous Pipe or Puncheon is in a trice whisked out of a little Cabin window!!! Now if this is not something new I should be very glad to know what is? Solomon, to be sure, some time ago gave it as his firm opinion that there was nothing new under the sun; but I should like to know what he would have said to this! And here I must observe what a cruel thing it was of that wise Monarch to lay down the law so positively in that particular. How many a bright genius has been stifled by

this smoky saying ! For my part I'm discouraged from all attempts at Novelty when I think if there was nothing new in those days, what must it be now when every bit of ground from Parnassus Top to the Mummy Pits of Egypt has been so poached ! However, I rejoice to see your spirit soars superior to the shackles King Solomon thought to impose ; and while I lament that my grovelling Nature cannot accompany you in your aerial flights I shall yet do my best to speed your success in this nether sphere. You say there are just two styles for which you have any taste, viz., the horrible and the astonishing ! Now, I'll groan for you till the very blood shall curdle in my veins, or I'll shriek and stare till my own eyes start out of their sockets with surprise—but as to writing with you——. In truth it would be as easy to compound a new element out of fire and water, as that we two should jointly write a Book ! . . . I've said nothing of my own obstacles, because I consider those on your side as sufficiently powerful ; but I assure you I could no more accomplish such a letter as you propose every week than a poor wretch could promise to be witty and agreeable when writhing in the cholic. In the first place, I really have not much time I can absolutely command, for in a Town, however privately or retired one may live, they're still liable to a thousand interruptions ; in the next place, I have enough to do with my time in writing to my sisters three, sewing my seam, improving my mind, making tea, playing whist, with numberless other duties, too tedious to mention ; and, in the third and last place, there's sometimes for a week together that I can't bear the sight of a pen and could no more invent a letter than I could have discovered the longitude. So for the present let us put our Child to sleep and hope for better times to wake him. Only, once for all, let me promise to you that I *will not* enter into any of

your Raw head and bloody bone schemes—I would not even *read* a Book that had a spectre in it, and as for committing a Mysterious and most foul murder, I declare I'd rather take a dose of *assafoetida*; so don't flatter yourself with the hope of associating me in your crimes and iniquities, for I'll be partner in none of your bloody purposes, Miss. . . .

VII.

Edinburgh, 26th May 1810.

I hope you won't set me down as stark staring mad, for I assure you, in spite of appearances, I'm only a *wee daft* and just wanted to divert myself, and I know I'd be safe with you, for you're a good dear and won't make a Fool of me—for a good reason, you'll say, because it's done to your hand. But seriously and truly I think you have just as much malice in you as would make you think it fine fun to shew what an old goose cap I am; but I give you warning, if ever you shew a single line of mine to any Man, Woman, or Child, I'm done with you for Ever and Ever; so if you want to get rid of me, there's a genteel opening for you. I've been languishing to write to you this age, but I've had such a fulness of blood about my head and chest, that I thought I was going to break a blood vessel, and so dared not put pen to paper—and that's the true cause of this long cessation. . . .

VIII.

. . . And now I must congratulate you upon your return to this favoured land, where I pray you may long flourish, and put forth branches and green leaves like a goodly tree. I was beginning to fear you were going to engraft your Noble stock upon some of the little acions

you wrote me about, particularly as I heard one of them was languishing for your love. Apropos of that passion so *miscalled*, did you hear that wee Wynne is going to clothe herself with a husband, and such a one ! Apollo is truly a God compared to him. Were there ever such a pair of little infatuated follies ? I hope they're mad, poor things, as their best and only excuse. Your cousin Anne * is my authority, so I refer you to her for the melancholy particulars. She is, I think, grown quite handsome, and is vastly sensible and agreeable. As for your base attempts to depreciate the charms of my present mode of living, I can only ascribe them to the blackest envy and grossest ignorance, else how can you compare the savage enjoyments to be found amongst your misty mountains to the elegant seclusion and refined pleasures to be met with in this queen of cities ? *There* you behold nothing but decaying Nature, such as dropping leaves, fading flowers, drooping trees. *Here* I contemplate the progress of the Arts in streets building, houses repairing, shops painting. *There* no sound salutes your ear save the monotonous din of some tinkling rill or tumbling cascade. *Here* I am regaled from morning till night with an enchanting variety from the majestic rumble of Hackney Coach to the elegant trot of a post chaise. While ever and anon intervenes the liquid notes of some sea nymph warbling "Caller herring." As to the Olfactory delights, I need not expatiate upon them, 'tis well known what a boundless store this Town affords, rich and inexhaustible as Nature herself ! As to my associating with *Cats*, if I do, let me tell you they are of a very different description from your wild Highland mousers, who would make no ceremony of tearing one's Eyes out, while my tame domesticated creatures are quite content if you throw them some

* Hon. Anne Napier, married, 1816, Sir P. Gibson Carmichael, Bart.

little, bit of a tattered reputation to play with. Mine, thank my stars! is of a texture to defy both tooth and claw! . . .

IX.

Sep. 26th.

. . . I daresay all the old Tabbies in Town are sitting on their sophas with "*white sashes*" on, ready to faint away at the sight of a Man! By the bye, she must have been an old-fashioned toad to have a handkerchief and a sash upon her person, and there's the mischief of wearing Clothes; had she been clad *al fresco* (as every modest woman ought) the deed could not have been done for want of those necessary implements of war; but to be sure, if people will furnish arms against themselves they must stand the consequences! And, to set you an example, I am going to tell you that I'm deeply and desperately in love! And what makes my case particularly deplorable is that there's not the least prospect of the dear Man lending so much as a little finger to pull me out of the mire into which he has plunged me! Were I possessed of the same mean spirit of bartering as you I'd have you to guess his degree; but you'd as [soon] bethink you of the great Cham of Tartary as the Right Honourable John Philpot Curran, Master of the Rolls, Ireland!!! I wish I could give you any idea of his charms but, alas! my pen does not, like Rousseau's, "*brule sur le papier*;" and none but a pen of fire could trace his character or record the charms of his conversation. Don't set me down for mad, for I assure you I'm only bewitched, and perhaps time and absence may dissolve the magic spells. He had the cruelty to tell me he liked me, and then he left me. Had my eyes been worth a button they'd soon have settled the matter; but there's the misery of being sent into the World with such Mussel shells!! I (a

modest maiden) said nothing, and it seems they were silent; and so we parted, never to meet again!!! But, seriously, I have been very much delighted and gratified by a visit from this most extraordinary being, "whose versatility of genius" (as St John Carr justly observes for once) "is the astonishment and admiration of all who come within its range." I'll certainly live seven years longer for having seen him. Lord Frederick* dined here with him, and was delighted. By the bye, I wonder how he can be plagued with that little fat *capon* (Mr Cailly) always trotting at his heels! . . .

X.

Your letter, Ma'am, with joy I read,
It seemed like tidings from the dead,
So full of fire and *Fiddle* too
Of spectres green and spirits blue.

Give me credit for my prudence which makes me withhold from your giddy pate the rest of my most adorable rhymes, but you may take my word for it that they are the cleverest, the wittiest, the sensiblest, the elegantest of possible verses, and that nothing the least like them has appeared since the day Eve first sported her green Dickie. As to your Base rhymes, I had seen them before and deemed them far *beneath* your notice, for who, pray, when they purchase a Fiddle ever thinks of looking to the case? In my humble opinion you might if you had pleased have played a mighty pretty tune upon this same Fiddle and danced to it also, not a *Horn* pipe but a good old-fashioned Country dance to the tune of "Money in both pockets," which let me tell you, Miss, is something better than

* Lord Frederick Campbell, brother of John, fifth Duke of Argyll; he was Lord Registrar of Scotland, and died in London, 1816.

your favourite air of "Go to the devil and shake yourself." Then to think of the happy consequences that would result to posterity from this Union! for as the family of the R.'s are rather remarkable for the *saving graces*, how completely would that evil propensity be counteracted by having a few drops of the A——ll blood circulating in their veins! As for Lord John, he need never hope to have rest in his bed if he don't make a marriage of it. The shade of Camilla will certainly haunt him and her perturbed spirit hover over his couch upbraiding him with broken vows if he fails to accomplish this grand desire. Apropos, pray ask him if he has a mind for another Bet upon that subject, as I heard to-day that the Physicians declare she is in no immediate danger. I heard also (what, however, I don't believe) that she says she has no fear of death as she has all her life been kind to *animals*. A most convenient creed I must own for some people, and if our rewards hereafter are to be proportioned to our merits in this particular, I know *one* little sinner who will rank very high amongst the Saints, but woe to me for the vengeance I used to take on the hides of your wretched hounds! What are your present pursuits and future plans? and is there any chance of your coming here in the course of the Winter?

I am busied in the *Arts and Sciences* at present, japanning old boxes, varnishing new ones, daubing velvet, and, in short, as the old wives say, "my hands never out of an ill turn." Then by way of pastime, I play whist every night to the very death with all the fusty Dowagers and musty mousers in the purlieu—and yet I'm alive! praise be to Oysters and porter. If you wish to be corpulent, eat a score of the one and drink a bottle of the other every day, and you'll soon be unwieldy and, if you persevere, will in time arrive at a *Waddle*. I send you a precious gift! a piece of charmed Cake which has undergone all

the customary ceremonies, such as being drawn thirteen times through the marriage ring, &c., &c. It is, alas! not my own, but I trust that will follow; it is the daughter of my Love who was this day married to my cousin, which makes a charming opening for me, as my beloved is [now] left solitary, and solitude is the nurse of love—but methinks eighty requires another sort of nurse, and so I shall insinuate my services. Fail not to relate your dreams unto me, and I will then expound. I hear stocking working is (or was) the rage, powers of grace! that I should live to hear of Lady Charlotte being *transmogrified* into a Make my obeisance to Lord John, and that no caricature has yet gladdened my sight. A Word to the Wise is enough. Did you ever get my Princesse de Wolfenbottle? As you never acknowledged her arrival, pray write to me speedily.

XI.

20th.

. . . . This is in revenge for your presumption in daring to talk of *Love* to a spinster of my years and discretion. Know, Mistress, that I despise Love and have no Love for anything in the World except wooden Men and acting Magistrates. How can you talk to me of balls and dances and drinking-bouts? I, who lead the life of a saint upon earth, and eschew all such evil and profane pursuits? But surely the Town, *I'm told*, is very dull, for it is pretty much the same to me at all seasons. By the bye, was it in joke or earnest that you said you were coming here in January? I hope it was the latter, as I think you'd be the better of six weeks of Reekie to *rub off the rusticity* you will doubtless have contracted in the Country. There are plenty of houses to be had, so do pray make up your mind and get your Mamma to pack up. You need not mind the

expense, because we're all to be dead before next summer. We're first to die of famine in the Winter, and Bonaparte's to come and rob and murder us all in the spring. So says the Dss of Gordon, and it must be so because she says everything she has ever predicted has always come to pass ———

XII.

. . . . I have been reading Emma, which is excellent ; there is no story whatever, and the heroine is no better than other people, but the characters are all so true to life and the style so piquant, that it does not require the adventitious aids of mystery and adventure. I have also read M. Simeon's Tour through Britain, a compilation of old newspapers, Travellers' Guides, Joe Millar Jests, impertinent gossip and vulgar scurrillity all tacked together in the most grating disjointed style that sets one's teeth on edge, and makes them feel as if they were trotting on the back of a donkey. His account of Inverary is that it contains some very ugly old fashioned Tapestry and coloured prints in the very worst taste, and that the trees are *Pyramids* stuck upon *Pivots*. Glencoe he describes as having fine steps with a *green carpet* spread upon them, that it is well *swept* and free from litters. Even a chambermaid would have scorned such figures of speech upon such an occasion. The Nightingale, he says, sings in a vulgar manner—he quizzes Shakespeare, condemns Raphael, and abuses Milton—but you must read the book and the copy, if you can get it enriched with my marginal notes, Modest ! . . .

XIII.

Feb. 13.

. . . Do you really think me capable of flattering ? *i.e.*, of saying what I don't think ? Attend to what

Julie say on this subject—the sentiment is the same, whether applied to Love or Friendship—“*L’amant qui loue en nous des perfections que nous n’avons pas les voit en effet telles qu’il les représente. Il ne ment point en disant des mensonges,*” &c. Now, I never did pretend to say you were *bonâ-fide*—and—and—all that I maintain is, that I think you so, which proves nothing, because an Ancient Philosopher has proved, or tried to prove (which is all the same in the Greek), that there’s no such thing as reality, that life’s a dream, pain a fancy, and that we’ve no further certainty of our existence than what our own imaginations give us. For aught I can tell, you may therefore be as ugly as an ape, as stupid as an owl, as venomous as a toad, as cruel as a hyena—you may destroy your offspring before they’re born, like the silly Ostrich—or you may carry them about with you in your Pouch like the tender Kangaroo. All these things you may be or do, and yet to my fancy you may be fairer than an Houri, wise as a Genii, benevolent as a *Brownie*. For my part, were you to cry me up to the skies and tell me I had the Grace and Innocence of Eve, with the beauty and amorous inclinations of Cleopatra, the virtue and delicacy of Lucretia, &c. &c., I never should have the incivility to tell you it was all a lie, or that you were speaking nonsense. . . .

XIV.

Thursday.

Deign, Madam, to withdraw your lofty eyes for a while from the flowered chintz of Lady M’Laughlan, and fix them upon the enclosed patterns of silk with the prices (oh! vulgar sound!) thereto affixed, while I (oh degradation unparalleled in the annals of novel writing) must descend from the sublime region of fiction to—the back of a Counter!!! How shall I

ever be able to cloathe this vulgar translation in elegant language, or where find terms to commune (as one Author ought to commune with another) upon the price of sarsnet and the width of lutestring. Let me try. That whose hue doth emulate the rose, and on its surface smooth doth bear the stars of heaven impressed by heaven's skill, doth on the top shelf of a little shop languish amidst dusty duffells, in which the village dame arrayed to Church or Market hies, and fustian strong, in which for thrift, clad by wise parents, is the wanton school boy, and hard and obdurate rattling in form of petticoat against the bare legs of country girl, and broad cloth, drab and blue, of which the careful farmer, after much conning and prudent confab with his dame and neighbours all, doth chuse his Sunday's coat. And flannels Welsh of smell most potent, in which the rheumy Granam seeks to shroud her shrivelled limbs. All these and many more my muse could sing, do with that starry robe abide. Six times the length of thy fair finger is its breadth, by some three-quarters called; Silver seven times told, by vulgar called seven shillings, the price of each fair yard. Turn we now to where the various hues, such as of painted rainbow, doth delight the roving eye of fickle youth. There's pink, denoting pride and vanity; and straw colour, mocking the hue of pining maid; and purple, by some stiled the light of love; and buff, symbolic of our happy state of nature; and white, emblem of virgin innocence. All these may then be thine for slips or linings, stout and warm, for twelve times four of pence formed of base brass, and stamped with Britain's power triumphant and monarch's head with laurel bound. And now to paint the lilac I essay. Pride of the spring, welcome thy blossoms fair and odoriferous! but fairer still to sight of youthful fair when by the Indian Artists' cunning hand thy beauties are with green and gold inwove and

stripes of silvery white. This in the coffers of a Dame doth dwell, whose niggard hand doth only draw it forth for love of sordid lucre, its extent doth much surpass thy utmost wishes; but she swears no shears shall e'er sever it in twain so long as she doth own it. Seven yards, I eke, an' half it owns, and for each yard this flinty female doth demand ten shillings good and bright. . . . I approve highly of christening each chapter,* but I think we'd as well motto them afterwards. Which of the heroines is to be Constance? The good girl or the bad? Call them what you will. Apropos, don't you think Monteith would be a better family name than Douglas? The second chapter should open with some history of the family, as one is brought quite slap-dash into it without knowing anything about them; not but what I think people should always *speak for themselves* in Books, but it may be proper to tell that the Mother died when they were all young, and that the Laird had got his sisters to superintend his family, &c. &c. What think you? . . .

To her sister, Mrs Connell.

I.

Jan. 17, 1802. Edin.

. . . I am much obliged to you for your invitation, and still more for the *inducement* you hold out to me, but I don't feel inclined to go quite so far in quest of a *husband*. I think you're very bold in promising to *insure* me one. I assure you it's more than most people would do, or even what I would do for myself. I was at a Concert a few nights ago, where I was somewhat annoyed by Widow Bell, who was there leading *four-*

* Of *Marriage*, in the composition of which Miss C. was consulted from the beginning.

and-twenty maidens; she looked so queer and so vulgar that I was fain to fight shy. She came bobbing along, striking out at all points and places, keys and *coppers* jingling in her pockets, led in triumph by a frightful male creature with a large *Bow Window* bound in blue and buff and a pair of pea-green upper legs. I thought I should have swooned with shame when she stopped and stared at me.

II.

Feb. 1833.

. . . to-day Mrs Graham * is gone to dine with the Edmonstones,† who give a fête previous to Mrs H[aliday] and [Miss] D[eleney Edmonstone] setting out on a tour of visits through Renfrewshire, etc., to visit some old friends, who they think must be dropping off soon! Not a word of their own dropping off; indeed they seem rather provoked at people for being ill, and I daresay they would give you a good scold for allowing such a *crotchet* to enter your head as that you could be indisposed, with your charming constitution. They are in great delight at hearing it announced that Sir Archibald's lady is to add a twig to the family tree, and is to come here for the purpose that it may be a Scotch plant. . . .

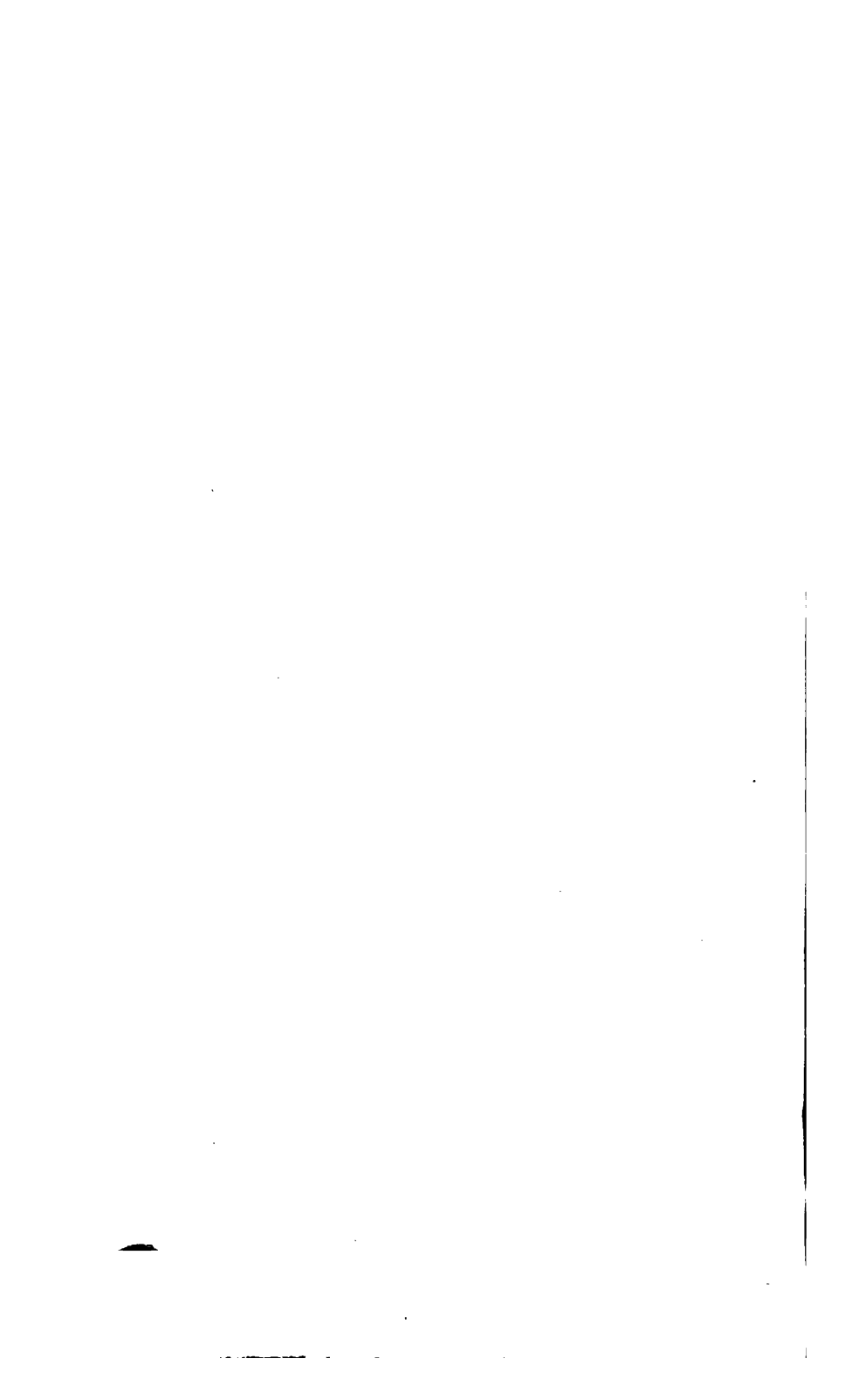
To Lady Charlotte Bury.‡

. . . I have been reading the *Corsair* lately; it is indeed exquisite, the most perfect I think of all Byron's performances. What a divine picture of death is that of the description of Guliare! I am now labouring

* Her eldest sister.

† The originals of the aunts in *Marriage*.‡ From *Diary of the Times of George IV.*, attributed to Lady B.

very hard at "Patronage," which I must honestly confess is the greatest lump of cold Lead I ever attempted to swallow. Truth, Nature, Life, and Sense there is, I daresay, in abundance, but I cannot discover a particle of imagination, taste, wit, or sensibility; and without these latter qualities I never could feel much pleasure in any book. In a novel especially, such materials are expected and, if not found, it is extremely disappointing to be made to pick a dry bone when one thinks one is going to enjoy a piece of honeycomb. It is for this reason that I almost always prefer a romance to a novel. We see quite enough of real life without sitting down to the perusal of a dull account of the commonplace course and events of existence. The Writer who imitates life like a Dutch painter who chooses for his subject turnips, fraus, and tables, is only the copyist of inferior objects; whereas the mind that can create a sweet and beautiful though visionary romance, soars above such vulgar topics and leads the mind of readers to elevated thoughts. Besides, it is so agreeable to live for a little while in the enchanted regions of romance; and since works of fiction are means (at least it is their legitimate aim) to amuse not to instruct; I think those which do not aspire to be useful, fulfil their calling better than those which set forth rules of morality and pretend to be censors on the public mind and conduct. . . .





MARRIAGE.

Chapter f.

Love!—A word by superstition thought a god; by use turned to an humour; by self-will made a flattering madness.
—*Alexander and Campaspe.*

“COME hither, child,” said the old Earl of Courtland to his daughter, as, in obedience to his summons, she entered his study: “come hither, I say; I wish to have some serious conversation with you: so dismiss your dogs, shut the door, and sit down here.”

Lady Juliana rang for the footman to take Venus; bade Pluto be quiet, like a darling, under the sofa; and, taking Cupid in her arms, assured his lordship he need fear no disturbance from the sweet creatures, and that she would be all attention to his commands—kissing her cherished pug as she spoke.

“You are now, I think, seventeen, Juliana,” said his lordship, in a solemn important tone.

“And a half, papa.”

“It is therefore time you should be thinking of establishing yourself in the world. Have you ever turned your thoughts that way?”

L.

A

"N—no, papa, not exactly in the way of establishing myself," replied the lady, hesitatingly.

"That is well; you have left that for me to do, like a good, wise little girl, as you are. Is it not so, my pretty Jule?"

"Perhaps, papa; but I—I don't know"—She stopped in evident embarrassment.

"It is right you should know, however," said the Earl, knitting his brow, "that I can give you no fortune."

"Oh, I don't in the least care about fortune, papa," eagerly interrupted his daughter, who knew about as much of arithmetic as of alchemy.

"Don't interrupt me, and don't talk nonsense, child," said Lord Courtland, peevishly. "As I can give you no fortune, you have, perhaps, no greater right than many other pretty portionless girls to expect a very brilliant establishment."

This was *said*, but not *thought* either by the father or daughter.

"At any rate, I don't in the least care about that sort of thing," said the lady, disdainfully; "else, if I chose—but I assure you, papa, I don't at all care about what is called a brilliant establishment."

"Indeed! and pray what *do* you care for, then?" inquired the earl, opening his eyes to their utmost extent.

"Why, I shouldn't at all mind being poor," said Lady Juliana, assuming a most heroic air.

"You shouldn't at all mind being poor!" repeated his lordship, in utter amazement. "You shouldn't at all mind being poor! Do you know what you are saying, child? Do you know what it is to be poor?"

"*Perfectly*, papa," was pronounced by her ladyship, in a tone of the most high-flown emphasis.

"You do? You have tried it, then?"

"No, papa ; but I can easily imagine what it is."

Lord Courtland hemmed. "Then I suppose I am to understand that you prefer the single state and poverty?"

"Dear papa ! you quite misunderstand me ; I only meant that—that it was nothing to be poor when—when"——

"When what?" demanded the earl, angrily.

"When united to the choice of one's heart," answered the lady, in a very romantic key.

"The choice of a fiddlestick !" exclaimed Lord Courtland, in a rage. "What have you to do with a heart? what has any body to do with a heart when their establishment in life is at stake? Keep your heart for your romances, child, and don't bring such nonsense into real life—heart, indeed!"

Lady Juliana felt she was now in the true position of a heroine: a handsome lover—an ambitious father—cruel fortune—unshaken constancy. She sighed deeply—even dropped a tear, and preserved a mournful silence.

The father proceeded in a solemn tone: "You ought to be aware by this time, Julia, that persons of rank must be guided entirely by family considerations in the connexions they form."

"Of course, papa, one wouldn't marry any but a person of good family, and tolerable fortune, and in the best society"——

"Pooh! these are nothing," cried the earl, contemptuously; "people of birth must marry for the still greater aggrandisement of their family—for the extending of their political influence—for"——

"I don't in the least care about politics, papa ; and I am determined I never will marry anybody who talks politics to me—I hate politics!"

"You are a little fool, and don't know what you will

do, or what you are talking about. What does your wise head or heart know about these things? What do you know of the importance of political family connexions?"

"O, thank heaven! I know nothing about the matter," replied Lady Julia, in a peevish tone. "Have done, Cupid!"

"I thought not; so you have only to be guided by those who do know—that's all, my dear!"

"Have done, Cupid!" cried the lady, still more fretfully, to her favourite pug, who was amusing himself by tearing the beautiful veil that partly shaded the head of his fair mistress.

The earl tried to be facetious. "And pray, my pretty Julia, can this same wonderful wise little head of yours tell you who is the happy man with whom I am about to form an alliance for you?"

"For me, papa!" exclaimed Lady Juliana, in a flutter of surprise; "surely you are not serious?"

"Perfectly so—come, guess."

Had Lady Juliana dared to utter the wishes of that heart, she would have been at no loss for a reply; but she saw the necessity for dissimulation; and, after naming such of her admirers as were most indifferent to her, she declared herself quite at a loss, and begged her father to put an end to her suspense.

"Now, what would you think of the Duke of L——?" asked the earl, in a voice of half-smothered exultation and delight.

"The Duke of L——!" repeated Lady Juliana, with a scream of horror and surprise; "surely, papa, you cannot be serious: why, he is red-haired and squints, and he's as old as you, and"——

"If he were as old as sin, and as ugly too," interrupted the enraged earl, "he should be your husband; and with my consent you never shall have any other!"

The youthful beauty burst into tears, while her father traversed the apartment with an inflamed and wrathful visage.

"If it had been any body but that odious duke!" sobbed the lovely Juliana.

"If it had been any body but that odious duke," repeated the earl, mimicking her, "they should not have had you. It has been my sole study, ever since I saw your brother settled, to bring about this alliance; and, when this is accomplished, my utmost ambition will be satisfied. So, no more whining—the affair is settled; and all that remains for you to do, is to study to make yourself agreeable to his grace, and to sign the settlements. No such mighty sacrifice, when repaid with a ducal coronet, the most splendid jewels, the finest equipages, the most magnificent house, the most princely establishment, and the largest jointure, of any woman in England."

Lady Juliana raised her head, and wiped her eyes. Lord Courtland perceived the effect his eloquence had produced upon the childish fancy of his daughter, and continued to expatiate upon the splendid joys that awaited her, in an union with a nobleman of the duke's rank and fortune; till at length, dazzled, if not convinced, she declared herself "satisfied that it was her duty to marry whoever papa pleased; but"—and a sigh escaped her, as she contrasted her noble suitor with her gay handsome lover—the admired of all admirers,—“but if I should marry him, papa, I am sure I shall never be able to love him.”

The earl smiled at her childish simplicity, as he assured her that was not at all necessary; that love was now entirely confined to the lower orders: that it was very well for ploughmen and dairy-maids, and such *canaille*, to marry for love; but for a young woman of rank to think of such a thing, was plebeian in the extreme!

Lady Juliana did not entirely subscribe to the arguments of her father; but the gay and glorious vision that floated in her brain stiffed for a while the pleadings of her heart; and with a sparkling eye, and an elastic step, she hastened to prepare for the reception of the duke.

For a few weeks the delusion lasted. Lady Juliana was flattered with the homage she received as a future duchess; she was delighted with the eclat that attended her, and charmed with the daily presents showered upon her by her noble suitor.

"Well, really, Favolle," said she to her maid, one day, as she clasped on her beautiful arm a resplendent bracelet, "it must be owned the duke has a most exquisite taste in trinkets; don't you think so? And, do you know, I don't think him so very—very ugly. When we are married, I mean to make him get a Brutus, cork his eyebrows, and have a set of teeth." But just then, the blue eyes, curling hair, and fine-formed person of a certain captivating Scotsman, rose to view in her mind's eye; and, with a peevish "pshaw!" she threw the bauble aside.

Educated for the sole purpose of forming a brilliant establishment, of catching the eye, and captivating the senses, the cultivation of her mind, or the correction of her temper, had formed no part of the system by which that aim was to be accomplished. Under the auspices of a fashionable mother, and an obsequious governess, the froward petulance of childhood, fostered and strengthened by indulgence and submission, had gradually ripened into that selfishness and caprice which now, in youth, formed the prominent features of her character. The earl was too much engrossed by affairs of importance, to pay much attention to any thing so perfectly insignificant as the mind of his daughter. Her *person* he had predetermined should be entirely at his disposal,

and he therefore contemplated with delight the uncommon beauty which already distinguished it; not with the fond partiality of parental love, but with the heartless satisfaction of a crafty politician.

The mind of Lady Juliana was consequently the sport of every passion that by turns assailed it. Now swayed by ambition, and now softened by love: the struggle was violent, but it was short. A few days before the one which was to seal her fate, she granted an interview to her lover, who, young, thoughtless, and enamoured as herself, easily succeeded in persuading her to elope with him to Scotland. There, at the altar of Vulcan, the beautiful daughter of the Earl of Courtland gave her hand to her handsome but penniless lover; and there vowed to immolate every ambitious desire, every sentiment of vanity and high-born pride. Yet a sigh arose as she looked on the sordid room, uncouth priest, and ragged witnesses; and thought of the special licence, splendid saloon, and bridal pomp that would have attended her union with the duke. But the rapturous expressions which burst from the impassioned Douglas made her forget the gaudy pleasures of pomp and fashion. Amid the sylvan scenes of the neighbouring lakes, the lovers sought a shelter; and, mutually charmed with each other, time flew for a while on downy pinions.

At the end of a few months, however, the enamoured husband began to suspect that the lips of his "angel Julia" could utter very silly things;—while the fond bride, on her part, discovered that, though her "adored Henry's" eyes were perfectly beautiful, yet sometimes she thought they wanted expression; and though his figure was symmetry itself, yet it certainly was deficient in a certain air—a *je ne sais quoi*—that marks the man of fashion.

"How I wish I had my pretty Cupid here!" said her ladyship with a sigh one day as she lolled on a sofa:

"he had so many pretty tricks, he would have helped to amuse us, and make the time pass; for really this place grows very stupid and tiresome; don't you think so, love?"

"Most exceedingly so, my darling," replied her husband, yawning sympathetically as he spoke.

"Then suppose I make one more attempt to soften papa, and be received into favour again?"

"With all my heart."

"Shall I say I'm very sorry for what I have done?" asked her ladyship with a sigh: "you know I did not say that in my first letter."

"Ay, do; and, if it will serve any purpose, you may say that I am no less so."

In a few days the letter was returned, in a blank cover; and, by the same post, Douglas saw himself superseded in the *Gazette*, being absent without leave!

There now remained but one course to pursue; and that was to seek refuge at his father's, in the Highlands of Scotland. At the first mention of it, Lady Juliana was transported with joy; and begged that a letter might be instantly despatched, containing the offer of a visit. She had heard the Duchess of M—— declare nothing could be so delightful as the style of living in Scotland: the people were so frank and gay, and the manners so easy and engaging: oh! it was delightful! And then Lady G—— and Lady Mary L——, and a thousand other lords and ladies she knew, were all so charmed with the country, and all so sorry to leave it. Then dear Henry's family must be so charming! An old castle, too, was her delight—she should feel quite at home while wandering through its long galleries; and she quite loved old pictures, and armour, and tapestry—and then her thoughts reverted to her father's magnificent mansion in D——shire.

At length an answer arrived, containing a cordial

invitation from the old laird to spend the winter with them at Glenfern Castle.

All impatience to quit the scenes of their short-lived felicity, they bade a hasty adieu to the now fading beauties of Windermere ; and, full of hope and expectation, eagerly turned towards the bleak hills of Scotland. They stopped for a short time at Edinburgh, to provide themselves with a carriage and some other necessaries. There, too, they fortunately met with an English Abigail and footman, who, for double wages, were prevailed upon to attend them to the Highlands ; which, with the addition of two dogs, a tame squirrel, and mackaw, completed the establishment.



Chapter ii.

What transport to retrace our early plays,
Our early bliss, when each thing joy supplied ;
The woods, the mountains, and the warbling maze
Of the wild brooks. THOMSON.

MANY were the dreary muirs, and rugged mountains, her ladyship had to encounter in her progress to Glenfern Castle ; and, but for the hope of the new world that awaited her beyond those formidable barriers, her delicate frame, and still more sensitive feelings, must have sunk beneath the horrors of such a journey. But she remembered the duchess had said the inns and roads were execrable ; and the face of the country, as well as the lower orders of people, frightful : but what signified those things ? There were balls, and rowing matches, and sailing parties, and shooting parties, and fishing parties, and parties of every description : and the certainty of being recompensed by the festivities of

Glenfern Castle reconciled her to the ruggedness of the approach.

Douglas had left his paternal home and native hills when only eight years of age. A rich relation of his mother's, happening to visit them at that time, took a fancy to the boy; and, under promise of making him his heir, had prevailed on his parents to part with him. At a proper age he was placed in the Guards, and had continued to maintain himself in the favour of his benefactor until his imprudent marriage, which had irritated the old bachelor so much, that he instantly disinherited him, and refused to listen to any terms of reconciliation. The impressions which the scenes of his infancy had left upon the mind of the young Scotsman, it may easily be supposed, were of a pleasing description. He spoke of his own family with all the warmth of early recollection. His father was quite the *beau idéal* of a Highland gentleman of the old school—frank, high-minded, and warm-hearted; his aunts so kind, simple, and affectionate; his brother so gay, handsome, and good-humoured; his five lovely sisters, Elizabeth, Rebecca, Barbara, Isabella, and Robina,—how charming they must be if they had fulfilled their early promises of youthful and infant beauty!—how his dear Juliana would love them, and how they would love his dear Juliana! Then he would expatiate on the wild but august scenery that surrounded his father's castle, and associate with the idea the boyish exploits which, though faintly remembered, still served to endear them to his heart. He spoke of the time when he used to make one of a numerous party on the lake, and, when tired of sailing on its glassy surface, to the sound of soft music, they would land at some lovely spot; and, after partaking of their banquet beneath a spreading tree, conclude the day by a dance on the grass.

Lady Juliana would exclaim, "How delightful!

I dote upon pic-nics and dancing! — *à-propos*, Henry, there will surely be a ball to welcome our arrival ;”

The conversation was interrupted ; for just at that moment they had gained the summit of a very high hill, and the post-boy, stopping to give his horses breath, turned round to the carriage, pointing, at the same time, with a significant gesture, to a tall, thin, grey house, something resembling a tower, that stood in the vale beneath. A small sullen-looking lake was in front, on whose banks grew neither tree nor shrub. Behind, rose a chain of rugged cloud-capped hills, on the declivities of which were some faint attempts at young plantations ; and the only level ground consisted of a few dingy turnip fields, enclosed with rude stone walls, or dikes, as the post-boy called them. It was now November ; the day was raw and cold, and a thick drizzling rain was beginning to fall. A dreary stillness reigned all around, broken only at intervals by the screams of the sea-fowl that hovered over the lake ; on whose dark and troubled waters was dimly descried a little boat, plied by one solitary being.

“What a scene !” at length Lady Juliana exclaimed, shuddering as she spoke. “What a scene ! how I pity the unhappy wretches who are doomed to dwell in such a place ! And yonder hideous grim house ; it makes me sick to look at it. Do bid him drive on !” Another significant look from the driver made the colour mount to Douglas’s cheek, as he stammered out, “Surely it can’t be ; yet somehow I don’t know. Pray, my lad,” letting down one of the glasses, and addressing the post-boy, “what is the name of that house ?”

“Hooss !” repeated the driver ; “ca’ ye thon a hooss ? Yon’s gude Glenfern Castle.”

Lady Juliana, not understanding a word he said, sat

silently, wondering at her husband's curiosity respecting such a wretched-looking place.

"Impossible! you must be mistaken, my lad: why, what's become of all the fine wood that used to surround it?"

"Gin you mean a wheen auld firs, there's some o' them to the fore yet," pointing to two or three tall, bare, scathed Scotch firs, that scarcely bent their heads to the wind that now began to howl around them.

"I insaist upon it that you are mistaken; you must have wandered from the right road," cried the now alarmed Douglas in a loud voice, which vainly attempted to conceal his agitation.

"We'll shune see that," replied the phlegmatic Scot, who, having rested his horses, and affixed a drag to the wheel, was about to proceed; when Lady Juliana, who now began to have some vague suspicion of the truth, called to him to stop, and, almost breathless with alarm, inquired of her husband the meaning of what had passed.

He tried to force a smile as he said, "It seems our journey is nearly ended; that fellow persists in asserting that that is Glenfern, though I can scarcely think it. If it is, it is strangely altered since I left it twelve years ago."

For a moment Lady Juliana was too much alarmed to make a reply: pale and speechless, she sank back in the carriage; but the motion of it, as it began to proceed, roused her to a sense of her situation, and she burst into tears and exclamations.

The driver, who attributed it all to fears at descending the hill, assured her she "needna be the least feared, for there were na twa cannier beasts atween that and Johnny Groat's Hooss; and that they wad hae her at the castle door in a crack, gin they were ance down the brae."

Douglas's attempts to soothe his high-born bride were not more successful than those of the driver: in vain he made use of every endearing epithet and tender expression, and recalled the time when she used to declare that she could dwell with him in a desert; her only replies were bitter reproaches and upbraidings for his treachery and deceit, mingled with floods of tears, and interrupted by hysterical sobs. Provoked at her folly, yet softened by her extreme distress, Douglas was in the utmost state of perplexity,—now ready to give way to a paroxysm of rage,—then melting into pity, he sought to soothe her into composure; and, at length, with much difficulty, succeeded in changing her passionate indignation into silent dejection.

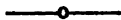
That no fresh objects of horror or disgust might appear to disturb this calm, the blinds were pulled down, and in this state they reached Glenfern Castle. But there the friendly veil was necessarily withdrawn; and the first object that presented itself to the high-bred Englishwoman was an old man, clad in a short tartan coat and striped woollen nightcap, with bleared eyes and shaking hands, who vainly strove to open the carriage door.

Douglas soon extricated himself, and assisted his lady to alight; then accosting the venerable domestic as "Old Donald," asked him if he recollected him?

"Weel that, weel that, Maister Harry, and ye're welcome hame; and ye tu, bonny sir" * (addressing Lady Juliana, who was calling to her footman to follow her with the mackaw); then, tottering before them, he led the way, while her ladyship followed, leaning on her husband, her squirrel on her other arm, preceded by her dogs, barking with all their might, and

* The Highlanders use this term of respect indifferently to both sexes.

attended by the mackaw, screaming with all his strength : and in this state was the Lady Juliana ushered into the drawing-room of Glenfern Castle !



Chapter iij.

What can be worse
Than to dwell here ?

Paradise Lost.

IT was a long, narrow, low-roofed room, with a number of small windows, that admitted feeble lights in every possible direction. The scanty furniture bore every appearance of having been constructed at the same time as the edifice ; and the friendship thus early formed still seemed to subsist, as the high-backed worked chairs adhered most pertinaciously to the grey walls, on which hung, in narrow black frames, some of the venerable ancestors of the Douglas family. A fire, which appeared to have been newly kindled, was beginning to burn, but, previous to showing itself in flame, had chosen to vent itself in smoke, with which the room was completely filled, and the open windows seemed to produce no other effect than that of admitting the wind and rain.

At the entrance of the strangers, a flock of females rushed forward to meet them. Douglas good-humouredly submitted to be hugged by three long-chinned spinsters, whom he recognised as his aunts, and warmly saluted five awkward purple girls he guessed to be his sisters : while Lady Juliana stood the image of despair, and, scarcely conscious, admitted in silence the civilities of her new relations ; till, at length, sinking into a chair, she endeavoured to conceal her agitation by calling to the dogs, and caressing her mackaw.



*of
which*

The laird, who had been hastily summoned from his farming operations, now entered. He was a good-looking old man, with something of the air of a gentleman, in spite of the inelegance of his dress, his rough manner, and provincial accent. After warmly welcoming his son, he advanced to his beautiful daughter-in-law, and, taking her in his arms, bestowed a loud and hearty kiss on each cheek; then, observing the paleness of her complexion, and the tears that swam in her eyes, "What! not frightened for our Highland hills, my leddy? Come, cheer up—trust me, ye'll find as warm hearts among them as ony ye hae left in your fine English *policies*"—shaking her delicate fingers in his hard muscular gripe, as he spoke.

The tears, which had with difficulty been hitherto suppressed, now burst in torrents from the eyes of the high-bred beauty, as she leant her cheek against the back of a chair, and gave way to the anguish which mocked control.

To the loud, anxious inquiries, and oppressive kindness of her homely relatives, she made no reply; but, stretching out her hands to her husband, sobbed, "Take, oh! take me from this place!"

Mortified, ashamed, and provoked, at a behaviour so childish and absurd, Douglas could only stammer out something about Lady Juliana having been frightened and fatigued; and, requesting to be shown to their apartment, he supported her almost lifeless to it, while his aunts followed, all three prescribing different remedies in a breath.

"Oh, take them from me!" faintly articulated Lady Juliana, as she shrank from the many hands that were alternately applied to her pulse and forehead.

After repeated entreaties and plausible excuses from Douglas, his aunts at length consented to withdraw; and he then exerted all the rhetoric he was master of,

to reconcile his bride to the situation love and necessity had thrown her into. But in vain he employed reasoning, caresses, and threats; the only answers he could extort were tears and entreaties to be taken from a place where she declared she felt it impossible to exist.

"If you wish my death, Harry," said she, in a voice almost inarticulate from excess of weeping, "oh! kill me quickly, and do not leave me to linger out my days, and perish at last with misery here!"

"Only tell me what you would have me to do," said her husband, softened to pity by her extreme distress, "and, if possible, I will comply with your wishes."

"Oh! then, stop the horses, and let us return immediately—do fly, dearest Harry, else they will be gone, and we shall never get away from this odious place!"

"Where would you go?" asked he, with affected calmness.

"Oh, any where—no matter where, so as we do but get away from hence—we can be at no loss."

"None in the world," interrupted Douglas, with a bitter smile, "as long as there is a prison to receive us. See," continued he, throwing a few shillings down on the table, "there is every sixpence I possess in the world."

Lady Juliana stood aghast.

At that instant, the English Abigail burst into the room; and, in a voice choking with passion, she requested her discharge, that she might return with the driver who had brought them there.

"A pretty way of travelling, to be sure, it will be," continued she, "to go bumping behind a dirty chaise-driver; but better to be shook to a jelly altogether, than stay amongst such a set of *Oaten-roads*." *

* Hottentots.

"What do you mean?" inquired Douglas, as soon as the voluble Abigail allowed him an opportunity of asking.

"Why, my meaning, sir, is to leave this here place immediately. Not that I have any objections either to my lady, or you, sir; but, to be sure, it was a sad day for me that I engaged myself to her ladyship. Little did I think that a lady of distinction would be coming to such a poor pitiful place as this. I am sure I thought I should ha' swooned when I was showed the hole where I was to sleep."

At the bare idea of this indignity to her person, the fury of the incensed fair one blazed forth with such strength as to choke her utterance.

Amazement had hitherto kept Lady Juliana silent; for to such scenes she was a stranger. Born in an elevated rank—reared in state—accustomed to the most obsequious attention—and never approached but with the respect due rather to a divinity than to a mortal,—the strain of vulgar insolence that now assailed her was no less new to her ears than shocking to her feelings. With a voice and look that awed the woman into obedience, she commanded her to quit her presence for ever; and then, no longer able to suppress the emotions of insulted pride, wounded vanity, and indignant disappointment, she gave way to a violent fit of hysterics.

In the utmost perplexity, the unfortunate husband, by turns, cursed the hour that had given him such a wife; now tried to soothe her into composure; but at length, seriously alarmed at the increasing attack, he called loudly for assistance.

In a moment, the three aunts and the five sisters all rushed together into the room, full of wonder, exclamation, and inquiry. Many were the remedies that were tried, and the experiments that were suggested; till, at length, the violence of passion exhausted itself, and a

faint sob, or deep sigh, succeeded the hysteric scream.

Douglas now attempted to account for the behaviour of his noble spouse, by ascribing it to the fatigue she had lately undergone, joined to distress of mind at her father's unrelenting severity towards her.

"O the amiable creature!" interrupted the unsuspecting spinsters, almost stifling her with their caresses as they spoke. "Welcome, a thousand times welcome, to Glenfern Castle!" said Miss Jacky, who was esteemed by much the most sensible woman, as well as the greatest orator, in the whole pariah. "Nothing shall be wanting, dearest Lady Juliana, to compensate for a parent's rigour, and make you happy and comfortable. Consider this as your future home. My sisters and myself will be as mothers to you: and see these charming young creatures," dragging forward two tall, frightened girls, with sandy hair and great purple arms; "thank Providence for having blest you with such sisters!"

"Don't speak too much, Jacky, to our dear niece at present," said Miss Grizzy; "I think one of Lady Maclaughlan's composing draughts would be the best thing for her—there can be no doubt about that."

"Composing draughts at this time of day!" cried Miss Nicky; "I should think a little good broth a much wiser thing. There are some excellent family broth making below, and I'll desire Tibby to bring a few."

"Will you take a little soup, love?" asked Douglas. His lady assented; and Miss Nicky vanished, but quickly re-entered, followed by Tibby, carrying a huge bowl of coarse Scotch broth, swimming with leeks, greens, and grease. Lady Juliana attempted to taste it, but her delicate palate revolted at the homely fare; and she gave up the attempt, in spite of Miss Nicky's earnest entreaties to take a few more of these excellent family broth.

"I should think," said Henry, as he vainly attempted to stir it round, "that a little wine would be more to the purpose than this stuff."

The aunts looked at each other; and, withdrawing to a corner, a whispering consultation took place, in which "Lady MacLaughlan's opinion, birch, balm, currant, heating, cooling, running risks," &c., &c., transpired. At length the question was carried; and some tolerable sherry, and a piece of very substantial *short-bread*, were produced.

It was now voted by Miss Jacky, and carried *nem. con.*, that her ladyship ought to take a little repose till the hour of dinner.

"And don't trouble to dress," continued the considerate aunt, "for we are not very dressy here: and we are to be quite a charming family party, nobody but ourselves, and," turning to her nephew, "your brother and his wife. She is a most superior woman, though she has rather too many of her English prejudices yet to be all we could wish; but I have no doubt, when she has lived a little longer amongst us, she will just become one of ourselves."

"I forget who she was?" said Douglas.

"A grand-daughter of Sir Duncan Malcolm's, a very old family of the — blood, and nearly allied to the present earl. And here they come," exclaimed she, on hearing the sound of a carriage; and all rushed out to receive them.

"Let us have a glimpse of this scion from a noble stock," said Lady Juliana, mimicking the accent of the poor spinsters, as she rose and ran to the window.

"Oh, Henry! do come and behold this equipage!" and she laughed with childish glee, as she pointed to a plain old-fashioned gig, with a large top. A tall handsome young man now alighted, and lifted out a female figure, so enveloped in a cloak, that eyes less penetrating

than Lady Juliana's could not, at a single glance, have discovered her to be a "frightful quiz."

"Only conceive the effect of this dashing equipage in Bond Street!" continued she, redoubling her mirth at the bright idea: then suddenly stopping, and sighing, "Ah, my pretty *vis-à-vis*! I remember the first time I saw you, Henry, I was in it at a review;" and she sighed still deeper.

"True; I was then aide-de-camp to your handsome lover, the Duke of L——,"

"Perhaps I might think him handsome now. People's taste alter according to circumstances."

"Yours must have undergone a wonderful revolution, if you can find charms in a hunchback of fifty-three."

"He is not a hunchback," returned her ladyship warmly; "only a little high-shouldered: but, at any rate, he has the most beautiful place and the finest house in England."

Douglas saw the storm gathering on the brow of his capricious wife, and, clasping her in his arms, "Are you indeed so changed, my Julia, that you have forgot the time when you used to declare you would prefer a desert with your Henry, to a throne with another?"

"No, certainly, not changed; but—I—I did not very well know then what a desert was; or, at least, I had formed rather a different idea of it."

"What was your idea of a desert?" said her husband, laughing; "do tell me, love?"

"Oh! I had fancied it a beautiful place, full of roses and myrtles, and smooth green turf, and murmuring rivulets, and, though very retired, not absolutely out of the world; where one could occasionally see one's friends, and give *déjeûnés et fêtes champêtres*."

"Well, perhaps the time may come, Juliana, when we may realise your Elysian deserts; but, at present, you know, I am wholly dependent on my father. I

hope to prevail on him to do something for me ; and that our stay here will be short ; as, you may be sure, the moment I can I will take you hence. I am sensible it is not a situation for you ; but for my sake, dearest Juliana, bear with it for a while, without betraying your disgust. Will you do this, darling ? ” and he kissed away the sullen tear that hung on her cheek.

“ You know, love, there’s nothing in the world I wouldn’t do for you,” replied she, as she played with her squirrel ; “ and, as you promise our stay shall be short, if I don’t die of the horrors I shall certainly try to make the agreeable. O my cherub ! ” flying to her pug, who came barking into the room, “ where have you been, and where’s my darling Psyche, and sweet mackaw ? Do, Harry, go and see after the darlings.”

“ I must go and see my brother and his wife first. Will you come, love ? ”

“ Oh, not now ; I don’t feel equal to the encounter : besides, I must dress. But what shall I do, since that vile woman’s gone ? I can’t dress myself. I never did such a thing in my life ; and I am sure it’s impossible that I can,” almost weeping at the hardships she was doomed to experience in making her own toilette.

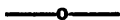
“ Shall I be your Abigail ? ” asked her husband, smiling at the distress ; “ methinks it would be no difficult task to deck my Julia.”

“ Dear Harry, will you really dress me ? Oh, that will be delightful ! I shall die with laughing at your awkwardness ; ” and her beautiful eyes sparkled with childish delight at the idea.

“ In the mean time,” said Douglas, “ I’ll send some one to unpack your things ; and after I have shook hands with Archie, and been introduced to my new sister, I shall enter on my office.”

"Now do, pray, make haste; for I die to see your great hands tying strings, and sticking pins."

Delighted with her gaiety and good humour, he left her caressing her favourites; and, finding rather a scarcity of female attendance, he despatched two of his sisters to assist his helpless beauty in her arrangements.



Chapter 16.

And ever against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs. *L' Allegro.*

Such solace as the bagpipe can give, they have long enjoyed.
—Dr JOHNSON'S *Journey to the Western Isles.*

WHEN Douglas returned, he found the floor strewn with dresses of every description; his sisters on their knees before a great trunk they were busied in unpacking, and his lady in her wrapper, with her hair about her ears, still amusing herself with her pets.

"See, how good your sisters are," said she, pointing to the poor girls, whose inflamed faces bore testimony to their labours. "I declare, I am quite sorry to see them take so much trouble," yawning as she leant back in her chair; "is it not quite shocking, Tommy?" kissing her squirrel. "Oh, pray, Henry, do tell me what I am to put on; for I protest I don't know. Favolle always used to choose for me; and so did that odious Martin, for she had an exquisite taste."

"Not so exquisite as your own, I am sure; so, for once, choose for yourself," replied the good-humoured husband; "and pray make haste, for my father waits dinner."

Betwixt scolding, laughing, and blundering, the dress was at length completed; and Lady Juliana, in all the

pomp of dress and pride of beauty, descended, leaning on her husband's arm.

On entering the drawing-room, which was now in a more comfortable state, Douglas led her to a lady who was sitting by the fire; and, placing her hand within that of the stranger, "Juliana, my love," said he, "this is a sister whom you have not yet seen, and with whom I am sure you will gladly make acquaintance."

The stranger received her noble sister with graceful ease; and, with a sweet smile and pleasing accent, expressed herself happy in the introduction. Lady Juliana was surprised, and somewhat disconcerted. She had arranged her plans, and made up her mind to be *con-descending*; she had resolved to enchant by her sweetness, dazzle by her brilliancy, and overpower by her affability. But there was a simple dignity in the air and address of the lady, before which even high-bred affectation sunk abashed. Before she found a reply to the courteous yet respectful salutation of her sister-in-law, Douglas introduced his brother; and the old gentleman, impatient at any farther delay, taking Lady Juliana by the hand, pulled rather than led her into the dining-room.

Even Lady Juliana contrived to make a meal of the roast mutton and muirfowl; for the laird piqued himself on the breed of his sheep, and his son was too good a sportsman to allow his friends to want for game.

"I think my darling Tommy would relish this grouse very much," observed Lady Juliana, as she secured the last remaining wing for her favourite; "bring him here!" turning to the tall, dashing lacquey who stood behind her chair, and whose handsome livery and well-dressed hair formed a striking contrast to old Donald's tartan jacket and bob-wig.

"Come hither, my sweetest cherubs!" extending her arms towards the charming *trio*, as they entered,

barking, and chattering, and flying to their mistress. A scene of noise and nonsense ensued.

Douglas remained silent, mortified and provoked at the weakness of his wife, which not even the silver tones of her voice, or the elegance of her manners, could longer conceal from him. But still there was a charm in her very folly, to the eye of love, which had not yet wholly lost its power.

After the table was cleared, observing that he was still silent and abstracted, Lady Juliana turned to her husband ; and, laying her hand on his shoulder, " You are not well, love ! " said she, looking up in his face, and shaking back the redundant ringlets that shaded her own.

" Perfectly so," replied her husband, with a sigh.

" What, dull ? then I must sing to enliven you." And, leaning her head on his shoulder, she warbled a verse of the beautiful little Venetian air *La Biondina in Gondoletta*. Then suddenly stopping, and fixing her eyes on Mrs Douglas, " I beg pardon, perhaps you don't like music ; perhaps my singing's a bore ? "

" You pay us a bad compliment in supposing so," said her sister-in-law, smiling ; " and the only atonement you can make for such an injurious doubt is to proceed."

" Does any body sing here ? " asked she, without noticing this request. " Do, somebody, sing me a song."

" O ! we all sing, and dance too," said one of the old young ladies ; " and after tea we will show you some of our Scotch steps ; but, in the mean time, Mrs Douglas will favour us with her song."

Mrs Douglas assented good-humouredly, though aware that it would be rather a nice point to please all parties in the choice of a song. The laird reckoned all foreign music, *i.e.*, everything that was not Scotch,

an outrage upon his ears ; and Mrs Douglas had too much taste to murder Scotch songs with her English accent. She therefore compromised the matter as well as she could, by selecting a Highland ditty clothed in her own native tongue ; and began to sing, with much pathos and simplicity, a verse or two of the lamented Leyden's " Fall of Macgregor."

" In the vale of Glenorchy the night breeze was sighing
O'er the tomb where the ancient Macgregors are lying ;
Green are their graves by their soft murmuring river,
But the name of Macgregor has perish'd for ever.

" On a red stream of light, by his grey mountains glancing,
Soon I beheld a dim spirit advancing ;
Slow o'er the heath of the dead was its motion,
Like the shadow of mist o'er the foam of the ocean.

" Like the sound of a stream through the still evening dying,—
Stranger ! who treads where Macgregor is lying ?
Darest thou to walk, unappall'd and firm-hearted,
'Mid the shadowy steps of the mighty departed ?

" See ! round thee the caves of the dead are disclosing
The shades that have long been in silence reposing ;
Thro' their forms dimly twinkles the moonbeam descending,
As upon thee their red eyes of wrath they are bending.

" Our grey stones of fame through the heath-blossom cover,
Round the fields of our battles our spirits still hover ;
Where we oft saw the streams running red from the
 mountains ;
But dark are our forms by our blue native fountains.

" For our fame melts away like the foam of the river,
Like the last yellow leaves on the oak-boughs that shiver :
The name is unknown of our fathers so gallant ;
And our blood beats no more in the breasts of the valiant.

" The hunter of red deer now ceases to number
The lonely grey stones on the field of our slumber.—
Fly, stranger ! and let not thine eye be reverted ;
Why should'st thou see that our fame is departed ? "

"Pray, do you play on the harp?" asked the volatile lady, scarcely waiting till the first stanza was ended; "and, *à-propos*, have you a good harp here?"

"We've neither gude nor bad," said the old gentleman gruffly: "the lassies hae something else to do than to be strumming upon harps."

"We have a very sweet spinnet," said Miss Jacky, "which, in my opinion, is a far superior instrument; and Bella will give us a tune upon it. Bella, my dear, let Lady Juliana hear how well you can play."

Bella, blushing like a peony rose, retired to a corner of the room, where stood the spinnet; and, with great, heavy, trembling hands, began to belabour the unfortunate instrument, while the aunts beat time, and encouraged her to proceed with exclamations of admiration and applause.

"You have done very well, Bella," said Mrs Douglas, seeing her preparing to *execute* another piece, and pitying the poor girl, as well as her auditors. Then whispering Miss Jacky that Lady Juliana looked fatigued, they arose to quit the room.

"Give me your arm, love, to the drawing-room," said her ladyship, languidly. "And now, pray, don't be long away," continued she, as he placed her on the sofa, and returned to the gentlemen.



Chapter 6.

You have displac'd the mirth, broke the good meeting
With most admir'd disorder. *Macbeth.*

THE interval, which seemed of endless duration to the hapless Lady Juliana, was passed by the aunts in giving sage counsel as to the course of life to be pursued by married ladies. Worst of stock-

ings and quilted petticoats were insisted upon as indispensable articles of dress ; while it was plainly insinuated, that it was utterly impossible any child could be healthy, whose mother had not confined her wishes to barley broth and oatmeal porridge.

"Only look at these young lambas," said Miss Grizzy, pointing to the five great girls ; "see what pictures of health they are ! I'm sure I hope, my dear niece, your children will be just the same—only boys, for we are sadly in want of boys. It's melancholy to think we have not a boy among us, and that a fine auntient race like ours should be dying away for want of male heirs." And the tears streamed down the cheeks of the good spinster as she spoke.

The entrance of the gentlemen put a stop to the conversation.

Flying to her husband, Lady Juliana began to whisper, in very audible tones, her inquiries, whether he had yet got any money—when they were to go away, &c., &c.

"Does your ladyship choose any tea ?" asked Miss Nicky, as she disseminated the little cups of coarse black liquid.

"Tea ! oh no, I never drink tea—I'll take coffee ; but Psyche loves tea." And she tendered the beverage, that had been intended for herself, to her favourite.

"Here's no coffee," said Douglas, surveying the tea-table ; "but I will ring for some," as he pulled the bell.

Old Donald answered the summons.

"Where's the coffee ?" demanded Miss Nicky.

"The coffee !" repeated the Highlander ; "troth, Miss Nicky, an' it's been clean forgot. An' 'deed it's nae wonder, considering the confusion that has been in this hoose this day !" And he held up his hands, as if to bear testimony to what his tongue was unable to declare.

"Well, but you can get it yet ?" said Douglas.

"'Deed, Maister Harry, the night's ower far gane for't noo; for the fire's a' ta'en up, ye see," reckoning with his fingers, as he proceeded; "there's parritch makin' for oor supper; and there's patatees boiling for the beasts; and"—

"I'll see about it myself," said Miss Nicky, leaving the room, with old Donald at her back, muttering all the way.

The old laird, all this while, had been enjoying his evening nap; but, that now ended, and the tea equipage being dismissed, starting up, he asked what they were about, that the dancing was not begun.

"Come, my leddy, we'll set the example," snapping his fingers, and singing, in a hoarse voice,

"The mouse is a merry beastie,
And the moudiwort wants the een;
But folk sall ne'er get wit,—
Sae merry as we twa hae been."

"But whar's the girlies?" cried he. "Ho! Belle, Becky, Betty, Baby, Beeny—to your posts!"

The young ladies, eager for the delights of music and dancing, now entered, followed by Coil, the piper, dressed in the native garb, with cheeks seemingly ready blown for the occasion. After a little strutting and puffing, the pipes were fairly set agoing in Coil's most spirited manner. But vain would be the attempt to describe Lady Juliana's horror and amazement at the hideous sounds that for the first time assailed her ear. Tearing herself from the grasp of the old gentleman, who was just setting off in the reel, she flew shrieking to her husband, and threw herself trembling into his arms, while he called loudly to the self-delighted Coil to stop.

"What's the matter—what's the matter?" cried the whole family, gathering round.

"Matter!" repeated Douglas warmly, "you have frightened Lady Juliana to death;—what did you mean," turning fiercely to the astonished piper, "by blowing that abominable bladder?"

Poor Coil gaped with astonishment; for never before had his performance on the bagpipe been heard but with admiration and applause.

"A bonny bargain, indeed, that canna stand the pipes," said the old gentleman, as he went puffing up and down the room: "she's no the wife for a Heeland man;—abominable blather, indeed! By my troth, ye're no blate!"

"I declare it's the most distressing thing I ever met with," sighed Miss Grizzy; "I wonder whether it could be the sight or the sound of the bagpipe that frightened our dear niece. I wish to goodness Lady MacLaughlan was here!"

"It's impossible the bagpipe could frighten anybody," said Miss Jacky, in a high key; "nobody with common sense could be frightened at a bagpipe."

Mrs Douglas here mildly interposed, and soothed down the offended pride of the Highlanders, by attributing Lady Juliana's agitation entirely to *surprise*. The word operated like a charm; all were ready to admit, that it was a surprising thing when heard for the first time. Miss Jacky remarked, that we are all liable to be surprised; and the still more sapient Grizzy said, that indeed it was most surprising the effect that surprise had upon some people. For her own part, she could not deny but that she was very often frightened when she was surprised, and very often surprised at having been frightened.

Douglas, meanwhile, was employed in soothing the terrors, real or affected, of his delicate bride; who declared herself so exhausted with the fatigue she had undergone, and the sufferings she had endured, that she

&c., &c. These inquiries were interrupted by the laird, who requested his son to take a turn with him while breakfast was getting ready, that they might talk over past events, and new plans; that he might see the plantation on the hill; the draining of the great moss; with other agricultural concerns which we shall omit, not having the same power of commanding attention from our readers, as the laird had from his hearers.

After repeated summonses, and many inquiries from the impatient party already assembled round the breakfast table, Lady Juliana made her appearance, accompanied by her favourites, whom no persuasions of her husband could prevail upon her to leave behind.

As she entered the room, her olfactory nerves were smote with gales, not of "Araby the blest," but of old cheese and herrings, with which the hospitable board was amply provided.

The ladies having severally exchanged the salutations of the morning, Miss Nicky commenced the operation of pouring out tea, while the laird laid a large piece of herring on her ladyship's plate.

"What am I to do with this?" exclaimed she: "do take it away, or I shall faint!"

"Brother, brother!" cried Miss Grizzy, in a tone of alarm, "I beg you won't place any unpleasant object before the eyes of our dear niece. I declare!—Pray, was it the sight or the smell of the beast* that shocked you so much, my dear Lady Juliana? I'm sure, I wish to goodness Lady MacLaughlan was come!"

Mr Douglas, or the major, as he was styled, immediately rose, and pulled the bell.

"Desire my gig to be got ready immediately after breakfast!" said he.

* In Scotland, everything that flies and swims ranks in the bestial tribe.

The aunts drew up stiffly, and looked at each other, without speaking; but the old gentleman expressed his surprise that his son should think of leaving them so soon.

"May we inquire the reason of this sudden resolution?" at length said Miss Jacky, in a tone of stifled indignation.

"Certainly, if you are disposed to hear it. It is because I find there is company expected."

The three ladies turned up their hands and eyes in speechless horror.

"Is it that virtuous woman, Lady Maclaughlan, you would shun, nephew?" demanded Miss Jacky.

"It is that insufferable pest I would shun," replied her nephew, with a heightened colour, and a violence very unusual with him.

The good Miss Grizzy drew out her pocket handkerchief; while Mrs Douglas vainly endeavoured to silence her husband, and avert the rising storm.

"Dear Douglas!" whispered she, in a tone of reproach.

"Oh, pray let him go on," said Miss Jacky, almost choking under the effort she made to appear calm. "Let him go on. Lady Maclaughlan's character, luckily, is far above the reach of calumny; nothing that Major Archibald Douglas can say will have power to change our opinions, or, I hope, to prejudice his brother and Lady Juliana against this most exemplary, virtuous woman—a woman of family, although English—of fortune—of talents—of accomplishments!—a woman of unblemished reputation! of the strictest morals! sweetest temper! charming heart! delightful spirits!—so charitable! every year gives fifty flannel petticoats to the old people of the parish"——

"Then such a wife as she is!" sobbed out Miss Grizzy. "And no wonder, considering that she has

been twice married ; and she has discovered I can't tell you how many most invaluable medicines for his complaint, and makes a point of his taking some of them every day : but for her, I'm sure he would have been in his grave long ago—there can be no doubt about that."

"She is doing all she can to send him there, as she has done many a poor wretch already, with her vile compositions," said Mr Douglas.

Here Miss Grizzy sunk back in her chair, overcome with horror ; and Miss Nicky let fall the tea-pot, the scalding contents of which discharged themselves upon the unfortunate Psyche, whose yells, mingling with the screams of its fair mistress, for a while drowned even Miss Jacky's oratory.

"Oh ! what shall I do ?" cried Lady Juliana, as she bent over her favourite. "Do send for a surgeon ; pray do fetch one directly, or she will die ; and it would quite kill me to lose my darling. Do fly, dearest Harry !"

"My dear Julia, how can you be so absurd ? there is no surgeon within twenty miles of this."

"No surgeon within twenty miles !" exclaimed she, starting up. "How could you bring me to such a place ! Those dear creatures may die—I may die myself before I can get any assistance !"

"Don't be frightened, my dear niece," said the good Miss Grizzy in a soothing accent. "I assure you you are perfectly safe here, for we are all doctors, and have plenty of every kind of medicine you can think of in the house—our excellent friend Lady Maclaughlan takes good care of that ; and I'm sure if it hadn't been for her we might all have been dead twenty times over ; but she is perfect mistress of every disease that ever was heard of,—there's no doubt about that !"

"Put a cauld patatee to the beast's paw," said the laird gruffly.

"Animals must learn patience as well as others," said Miss Jacky.

"We are never too old to learn," said Miss Nicky.

"I'm sure that's true—nobody can dispute that," said Miss Grizzy, "but at the same time I declare I think we ought to try that new box of scald ointment of Lady Maclaughlan's; I'm certain she would think it well bestowed."

"If it don't cure, it will kill," said Mr Douglas, with a smile.

"Brother!" said Miss Jacky, rising with dignity from her chair, and waving her hand as she spoke—"Brother! I appeal to you, to protect the character of this most amiable, virtuous, respectable matron from the insults and calumny your son thinks proper to load it with. The daughter of Sir Hildebrand Dak—the great-granddaughter of our common ancestress Lady Janet Campbell—the widow of Colonel Lawless—the wife of Sir Sampson Maclaughlan—to be thus blackened and wounded by your son! Brother! Sir Sampson Maclaughlan is your friend; and it therefore becomes your duty to defend his wife to your latest breath!"

"Troth, but I'll hae enough to do, if I am to stand up for a' my friends' wives," said the old gentleman. "But, however, Archie, you are to blame: Leddy Maclaughlan is a very respectable woman; at least, as far as I ken, though she is a little free in the gab; and, out of respect to my auld friend Mr Sampson, it is my desire that you should remain here to receive him, and that you treat both him and his leddy discreetly."

This was said in too serious a tone to be disputed; and his son was obliged to submit.

The ointment meanwhile having been applied to Psyche's paw, peace was restored, and breakfast recommenced.

"I declare our dear niece has not tasted a morsel," observed Miss Nicky.

"Bless me, here's charming barley-meal scones," cried one, thrusting a plateful of them before her.—"Here's tempting pease-bannocks," interposed another, "and oat cakes! I'm sure your ladyship never saw such cakes."

"I can't eat any of those things," said their delicate niece, with an air of disgust. "I should like some muffin and chocolate."

"You forget you are not in London, my love," said her husband, reproachfully.

"No, indeed I do not forget it. Well, then, give me some toast," with an air of languid condescension.

"Unfortunately, we happen to be quite out of loaf bread at present," said Miss Nicky; "but we've sent to Drymsine for some. They bake excellent bread at Drymsine."

"Is there nothing within the bounds of possibility you could fancy, Julia?" asked Douglas. "Do think, love."

"I think I should like some grouse, or a beef steak, if it was very nicely done," returned her ladyship in a languishing tone.

"Beef steak!" repeated Miss Grizzy.

"Beef steak!" responded Miss Jacky.

"Beef steak!" reverberated Miss Nicky.

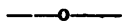
After much deliberation and consultation amongst the three spinsters, it was at length unanimously carried that the lady's whim should be indulged.

"Only think, sisters," observed Miss Grizzy in an undertone, "what reflections we should have to make upon ourselves, if any of our descendants were to resemble a moor-fowl!"

"Or have a face like a raw beef steak!" said Miss Nicky.

These arguments were unanswerable; and a smoking

steak and plump moor-fowl were quickly produced ; of which Lady Juliana partook, in company with her four-footed favourites.



Chapter bis.

When winter soaks the fields, and female feet—
Too weak to struggle with tenacious clay,
Or ford the rivulets—are best at home.

The Task.

THE meal being at length concluded, Glenfern desired Henry to attend him on a walk, as he wished to have a little more private conversation with him. Lady Juliana was beginning a remonstrance against the cruelty of taking Harry away from her ; when her husband whispering her, that he hoped to make something of the old gentleman, and that he should soon be back, she suffered him to depart in silence.

Old Donald having at length succeeded in clearing the table of its heterogeneous banquet, it was quickly covered with the young ladies' work.

Miss Nicky withdrew to her household affairs. Miss Jacky sat with one eye upon Lady Juliana, the other upon her five nieces. Miss Grizzy seated herself by her ladyship, holding a spread letter of Lady Mac-laughlan's before her as a screen.

While the young ladies busily plied their needles, the elder ones left no means untried to entertain their listless niece, whose only replies were exclamations of weariness, or expressions of affection bestowed upon her favourites.

At length even Miss Jacky's sense, and Miss Grizzy's good-nature, were *at fault* ; when a ray of

sunshine darting into the room suggested the idea of a walk. The proposal was made, and assented to by her ladyship, in the twofold hope of meeting her husband and pleasing her dogs, whose whining and scratching had for some time testified their desire of a change. The ladies therefore separated to prepare for their *sortie*, after many recommendations from the aunts to be sure to *hap* * well; but, as if distrusting her powers in that way, they speedily equipped themselves, and repaired to her chamber, arrayed *cap-à-pié* in the walking costume of Glenfern Castle. And, indeed, it must be owned their style of dress was infinitely more judicious than that of their fashionable niece; and it was not surprising that they, in their shrunk duffle great-coats, vast poke-bonnets, red worsted neckcloths, and pattens, should gaze with horror at her lace cap, lilac satin pelisse, and silk shoes. Ruin to the whole race of Glenfern, present and future, seemed inevitable from such a display of extravagance and imprudence. Having surmounted the first shock, Miss Jacky made a violent effort to subdue her rising wrath; and, with a sort of convulsive smile, addressed Lady Juliana: "Your ladyship, I perceive, is not of the opinion of our inimitable bard, who, in his charming poem 'The Seasons,' says, 'Beauty needs not the foreign aid of ornament; but is, when unadorned, adorned the most.' That is a truth that ought to be impressed on every young woman's mind."

Lady Juliana only stared. She was as little accustomed to be advised as she was to hear Thomson's Seasons quoted.

"I declare that's all quite true," said the more tempering Grizzy; "and certainly our girls are not in the least taken up about their dress, poor things! which is a great comfort. At the same time, I'm sure

* Wrap.

it's no wonder your ladyship should be taken up about yours, for certainly that pelisse is most beautiful,—nobody can deny that; and I dare say it is the very newest fashion. At the same time, I'm just afraid that it's rather too delicate, and that it might perhaps get a little dirty on our roads; for although, in general, our roads are quite remarkable for being always dry, which is a great comfort in the country, yet, you know, the very best roads of course must be wet sometimes. And there's a very bad step just at the door almost, which Glenfern has been always speaking about getting mended. But, to be sure, he has so many things to think about, that it's no wonder he forgets sometimes; but I dare say he will get it done very soon now."

The prospect of the road being mended produced no better effect than the quotation from Thomson's Seasons. It was now Miss Nicky's turn.

"I'm afraid your ladyship will frighten our stirks and stots with your finery. I assure you, they are not accustomed to see such fine figures; and," putting her hand out at the window, "I think it's spitting already." *

All three now joined in the chorus, beseeching Lady Juliana to put on something warmer and more wise-like.

"I positively have nothing," cried she, wearied with their importunities, "and I shan't get any winter things now till I return to town. My *roquelaire* does very well for the carriage."

The acknowledgment at the beginning of this speech was enough. All three instantly disappeared, like the genii of Aladdin's lamp, and, like that same person, presently returned, loaded with what, in their eyes, were precious as the gold of Arabia. One displayed a hard worsted shawl, with a flower-pot at each corner; another held up a tartan cloak, with a hood; and a

* A common expression in Scotland to signify slight rain.

third thrust forward a dark cloth joseph, lined with flannel ; while one and all showered down a variety of old bonnets, fur tippets, hair soles, clogs, pattens, and endless *et ceteras*. Lady Juliana shrank with disgust from these "delightful haps," and resisted all attempts to have them forced upon her, declaring, in a manner which showed her determined to have her own way, that she would either go out as she was, or not go out at all. The aunts were therefore obliged to submit, and the party proceeded to what was termed the high road, though a stranger would have sought in vain for its pretensions to that title. Far as the eye could reach, and that was far enough, not a single vehicle could be descried on it, though its deep ruts showed that it was well frequented by carts. The scenery might have had charms for Ossian, but it had none for Lady Juliana ; who would rather have been entangled in a string of Bond Street equipages, than traversing "the lonely heath, with the stream murmuring hoarsely ; the old trees groaning in the wind ; the troubled lake," and the still more troubled sisters. As may be supposed, she very soon grew weary of the walk. The bleak wind pierced her to the soul ; her silk slippers and lace flounces became undistinguishable masses of mud ; her dogs chased the sheep, and were, in their turn, pursued by the "nowts," as the ladies termed the steers. One sister expatiated on the great blessing of having a peat moss at their door ; another was at pains to point out the purposed site of a set of new offices ; and the third lamented that her ladyship had not on thicker shoes, that she might have gone and seen the garden. More than ever disgusted and wretched, the hapless Lady Juliana returned to the house, to fret away the time till her husband's return.

Chapter liij.

— On se rend insupportable dans la société par des défauts légers, mais qui se font sentir à tout moment.—
VOLTAIRE.

THE family of Glenfern have already said so much for themselves, that it seems as if little remained to be told by their biographer. Mrs Douglas was the only member of the community who was at all conscious of the unfortunate association of characters and habits that had just taken place. She was a stranger to Lady Juliana; but she was interested by her youth, beauty, and elegance, and felt for the sacrifice she had made,—a sacrifice so much greater than it was possible she ever could have conceived or anticipated. She could in some degree enter into the nature of her feelings towards the old ladies; for she, too, had felt how disagreeable people might contrive to render themselves, without being guilty of any particular fault; and how much more difficult it is to bear with the weaknesses than the vices of our neighbours. Had these ladies' failings been greater in a moral point of view, it might not have been so arduous a task to put up with them. But to love such a set of little, trifling, tormenting foibles, all dignified with the name of virtues, required, from her elegant mind, an exertion of its highest principles; a continual remembrance of that difficult Christian precept, "to bear with one another." A person of less sense than Mrs Douglas would have endeavoured to open the eyes of their understandings, on what appeared to be the folly and narrow-mindedness of their ways; but she refrained from the attempt, not from want of benevolent exertion, but from an innate conviction that their foibles all originated in what was now incurable; viz., the natural weakness of their minds, together

with their ignorance of the world, and the illiberality and prejudices of a vulgar education. "These poor women," reasoned the charitable Mrs Douglas, "are, perhaps, after all, better characters in the sight of God than I am. He who has endowed us all as his wisdom has seen fit, and has placed me amongst them,—Oh! may he teach me to remember, that we are all his children, and enable me to bear with their faults, while I study to correct my own."

Thus did this amiable woman contrive, not only to live in peace, but, without sacrificing her own liberal ideas, to be actually beloved by those amongst whom her lot had been cast, however dissimilar to herself. But for that Christian spirit, (in which must ever be included a liberal mind and gentle temper), she must have felt towards her connexions a still stronger repugnance than was even manifested by Lady Juliana; for Lady Juliana's superiority over them was merely that of refined habits and elegant manners; whereas Mrs Douglas's was the superiority of a noble and highly gifted mind, which could hold no intercourse with theirs, except by stooping to the level of their low capacities. But, that the merit of her conduct may be duly appreciated, I shall endeavour to give a slight sketch of the female *dramatis persone* of Glenfern Castle.

Miss Jacky, the senior of the trio, was what is reckoned a very sensible woman—which generally means, a very disagreeable, obstinate, illiberal director of all men, women, and children—a sort of superintendent of all actions, time, and place—with unquestioned authority to arraign, judge, and condemn, upon the statutes of her own supposed sense. Most country parishes have their sensible woman, who lays down the law on all affairs spiritual and temporal. Miss Jacky stood unrivalled as the sensible woman of Glenfern. She had attained this eminence, partly

from having a little more understanding than her sisters, but principally from her dictatorial manner, and the pompous, decisive tone, in which she delivered the most common-place truths. At home, her supremacy in all matters of sense was perfectly established; and thence the infection, like other superstitions, had spread over the whole neighbourhood. As a sensible woman, she regulated the family, which she took care to let everybody see; she was conductor of her nieces' education, which she took care to let every body hear; she was a sort of postmistress-general—a detector of all abuses and impositions; and deemed it her prerogative to be consulted about all the useful and useless things, which every body else could have done as well. She was liberal of her advice to the poor, always enforcing upon them the iniquity of idleness, but doing nothing for them in the way of employment—strict economy being one of the many points in which she was particularly sensible. The consequence was, while she was lecturing half the poor women in the parish for their idleness, the bread was kept out of their mouths, by the incessant shaping, and sewing, and marking, and marring, and putting in, and picking out, and carding of wool and knitting of stockings, and spinning, and reeling, and winding, and pining, that went on amongst the ladies themselves. And, by the bye, Miss Jacky is not the only sensible woman who thinks she is acting a meritorious part, when she converts what ought to be the portion of the poor into the employment of the affluent.

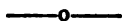
In short, Miss Jacky was all over sense. A skilful physiognomist would, at a single glance, have detected the sensible woman, in the erect head, the compressed lips, square elbows, and firm judicious step. Even her very garments seemed to partake of the prevailing char-

acter of their mistress: her ruff always looked more sensible than any other body's; her shawl sat more sensibly on her shoulders; her walking shoes were acknowledged to be very sensible; and she drew on her gloves with an air of sense, as if the one arm had been Seneca, the other Socrates. From what has been said, it may easily be inferred that Miss Jacky was, in fact, any thing but a sensible woman; as indeed no one can be, who bears such visible outward marks of what is in reality the most quiet and unostentatious of all good qualities. But there is a spurious sense, which passes equally well with the multitude: it is easily assumed, and still easier maintained; common truths, and a grave, dictatorial air, being all that is necessary for its support.

Miss Grizzy's character will not admit of as long a commentary as that of her sister: she was merely distinguishable from nothing by her simple good nature, the inextricable entanglement of her thoughts, which she always sought to adjust by an emphatic asseveration, her love of letter-writing, and her friendship with Lady Maclaughlan. Miss Nicky had about as much sense as Miss Jacky; but, as no kingdom can maintain two kings, so no family can admit of two sensible women; and Nicky was, therefore, obliged to confine hers to the narrowest possible channels of housekeeping, mantua-making, &c., and to sit down for life (or at least till Miss Jacky should be married) with the dubious character of "not wanting for sense either." With all these little peccadilloes, the sisters possessed some good properties: they were well-meaning, kind-hearted, and, upon the whole, good-tempered; they loved one another, revered their brother, doated upon their nephews and nieces, took a lively interest in the poorest of their poor cousins a hundred degrees removed, and had a firm conviction of the perfectibility of human nature, as exemplified in the persons of all their own friends. "Even

The record of the year.

their failings leaned to virtue's side ;" for whatever they did was with the intention of doing good, though the means they made use of generally produced an opposite effect. In short, they were not of the M'Larty, or "*canna be fashed*," school ; for their life was one continued *fash* about every thing or nothing. But there are so many Miss Douglasses in the world, that doubtless every one of my readers is as well acquainted with them as I am myself. I shall, therefore, leave them to finish the picture according to their own ideas, while I return to the parlour, where the worthy spinsters are seated in expectation of the arrival of their friend.



Chapter ix.

Though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed—
For contemplation he, and valour formed ;
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace.

MILTON.

"WHAT *can* have come over Lady Mac-
laughlan ?" said Miss Grizzy, as she sat
at the window in a dejected attitude.

"I think I hear a carriage at last," cried Miss Jacky,
turning up her ear : "Wisht ! let us listen."

"It's only the wind," sighed Miss Grizzy.

"It's the cart with the bread," said Miss Nicky.

"It's Lady Maclaughlan, I assure you," pronounced
Miss Jacky.

The heavy rumble of a ponderous vehicle now pro-
claimed the approach of the expected visitor ; which
pleasing anticipation was soon changed into blissful
certainty, by the approach of a high-roofed, square-
bottomed, pea-green chariot, drawn by two long-tailed

white horses, and followed by a lacquey in the Highland garb. Out of this equipage issued a figure clothed in a light coloured, large flowered chintz raiment, carefully drawn through the pocket holes, either for its own preservation, or the more disinterested purpose of displaying a dark short stuff petticoat, which, with the same liberality, afforded ample scope for the survey of a pair of delicately formed feet and ankles, clad in worsted stockings and black leather shoes something resembling buckets. A faded red cloth jacket, which bore evident marks of having been severed from its native skirts, now acted in the capacity of a spencer. On the head rose a stupendous fabric, in the form of a cap, on the summit of which was placed a black beaver hat, tied *à la poissarde*. A small black satin muff in one hand, and a gold-headed walking-stick in the other, completed the dress and decoration of this personage.

The lacquey, meanwhile, advanced to the carriage; and putting in both his hands, as if to catch something, he pulled forth a small bundle, enveloped in a military cloak, the contents of which would have baffled conjecture, but for the large cocked hat, and little booted leg, which protruded at opposite extremities.

A loud, but slow and well modulated, voice now resounded through the narrow stone passage that conducted to the drawing-room.

"Bring him in—bring him in, Philistine! I always call my man Philistine, because he has Sampson in his hands. Set him down there," pointing to an easy chair, as the group now entered, headed by Lady MacLaughlan.

"Well, girls!" addressing the venerable spinsters, as they severally exchanged a tender salute: so you're all alive, I see:—humph!"

"Dear Lady MacLaughlan, allow me to introduce our beloved niece, Lady Juliana Douglas," said Miss

Grizzy, leading her up, and bridling as she spoke, with ill suppressed exultation.

"So—you're very pretty—yes, you are very pretty!" kissing the forehead, cheeks, and chin of the youthful beauty, between every pause. Then, holding her at arm's length, she surveyed her from head to foot, with elevated brows, and a broad fixed stare.

"Pray sit down, Lady Maclaughlan," cried her three friends all at once, each tendering a chair.

"Sit down!" repeated she; "why, what should I sit down for? I choose to stand—I don't like to sit—I never sit at home—Do I, Sir Sampson?" turning to the little warrior, who, having been seized with a violent fit of coughing on his entrance, had now sunk back, seemingly quite exhausted, while the *Philistine* was endeavouring to disencumber him of his military accoutrements.

"How very distressing Sir Sampson's cough is!" said the sympathising Miss Grizzy.

"Distressing, child! No—it's not the least distressing. How can a thing be distressing that does no harm? He's much the better of it—it's the only exercise he gets."

"Oh! well, indeed, if that's the case, it would be a thousand pities to stop it," replied the accommodating spinster.

"No, it wouldn't be the least pity to stop it!" returned Lady Maclaughlan, in her loud authoritative tone; "because, though it's not distressing, it's very disagreeable. But it cannot be stopped—you might as well talk of stopping the wind—it is a cradle cough."

"My dear Lady Maclaughlan!" screamed Sir Sampson, in a shrill pipe, as he made an effort to raise himself, and rescue his cough from this aspersion; "how can you persist in saying so, when I have told you so

often it proceeds entirely from a cold caught a few years ago, when I attended his Majesty at" —— Here a violent relapse carried the conclusion of the sentence along with it.

"Let him alone—don't meddle with him," called his lady to the assiduous nymphs who were bustling around him—"leave him to Philistine; he's in very good hands when he is in Philistine's." Then, resting her chin upon the head of her stick, she resumed her scrutiny of Lady Juliana.

"You really are a pretty creature! You've got a very handsome nose, and your mouth's very well, but I don't quite like your eyes, they're too large and too light; they're saucer eyes, and I don't like saucer eyes. Why ha'nt you black eyes? you're not a bit like your father—I knew him very well. Your mother was an heiress, your father married her for her money, and she married him to be a countess, and so that's the history of their marriage—humph."

This well-bred harangue was delivered in an unvarying tone, and with unmoved muscles; for though the lady seldom failed of calling forth some conspicuous emotion, either of shame, mirth, or anger, on the countenances of her hearers, she had never been known to betray any correspondent feelings on her own. Yet her features were finely formed, marked, and expressive; and, in spite of her ridiculous dress and rude eccentric manners, an air of aristocracy, and even of dignity, was diffused over her whole person, that screened her from the ridicule or insult to which she must otherwise have been exposed. For amazement at the uncouth garb and singular address of Lady Maclaughlan, was seldom unmixed with terror at the stern imperious manner that accompanied all her words and actions. Such were the feelings of Lady Juliana, as she remained subjected to her rude gaze, and impertinent remarks.

"My lady!" squeaked Sir Sampson from forth his easy chair.

"My love?" interrogated his lady, as she leaned upon her stick.

"I want to be introduced to my Lady Juliana Douglas; so give me your hand," attempting, at the same time, to emerge from the huge leathern receptacle into which he had been plunged by the care of the kind sisters.

"Oh, pray sit still, dear Sir Sampson," cried they as usual all at once; "our sweet niece will come to you; don't take the trouble to rise, pray don't," each putting a hand on this man of might, as he was half risen, and pushing him down.

"Ay, come here, my dear," said Lady Maclaughlan; "you're abler to walk to Sir Sampson than he to you," pulling Lady Juliana in front of the easy chair; "there—that's her; you see she is very pretty."

"Zounds, what is the meaning of all this!" screamed the enraged baronet. "My Lady Juliana Douglas, I am shocked beyond expression at this freedom of my lady's. I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons; pray be seated. I'm shocked—I am ready to faint at the impropriety of this introduction, so contrary to all rules of etiquette. How *could* you behave in such a manner, my Lady Maclaughlan?"

"Why, you know, my dear, your legs may be very good legs, but they can't walk," replied she, with her usual *sang froid*.

"My Lady Maclaughlan, you perfectly confound me!" stuttering with rage. "My Lady Juliana Douglas, see here," stretching out a meagre shank, to which not even the military boot and large spur could give a respectable appearance. "You see that leg strong and straight," stroking it down; "now, behold the fate of war!" dragging forward the other, which

was shrunk and shrivelled to almost one half its original dimensions. "These legs were once the same; but I repine not—I sacrificed it in a noble cause—to that leg my sovereign owes his life!"

"Well, I declare, I had no idea; I thought always it had been rheumatism," burst from the lips of the astonished spinsters, as they crowded round the illustrious limb, and regarded it with looks of veneration.

"Humph!" emphatically uttered his lady.

"The story's a simple one, ladies, and soon told: I happened to be attending his majesty at a review; I was then aide-de-camp to Lord ——. His horse took fright, I—I—I,"—here, in spite of all the efforts that could be made to suppress it, the *royal cough* burst forth with a violence that threatened to silence its brave owner for ever.

"It's very strange you will talk, my love," said his sympathising lady, as she supported him; "talking never did and never will agree with you; it's very strange what pleasure people take in talking—humph!"

"Is there any thing dear Sir Sampson could take?" asked Miss Grizzy.

"*Could* take? I don't know what you mean by *could* take. He couldn't take the moon, if you mean that; but he must take what I give him; so call Philistine, he knows where my cough tincture is."

"Oh, we have plenty of it in this press," said Miss Grizzy, flying to a cupboard; and, drawing forth a bottle, she poured out a bumper, and presented it to Sir Sampson.

"I'm poisoned!" gasped he, feebly; "that's not my lady's cough-tincture."

"Not cough-tincture!" repeated the horror-struck doctress, as for the first time she examined the label; "O! I declare, neither it is—its my own stomach lotion. Bless me, what will be done!" and she

wrung her hands in despair. "Oh, Murdoch," flying to the *Philistine*, as he entered with the real cough-tincture, "I've given Sir Sampson a dose of my own stomach lotion by mistake, and I am terrified for the consequences!"

"Oo, but hur needna be feared, hur will no be a hair the war o't; for hur wadna tak' the stuff that the leddie ordered hur yesterday."

"Well, I declare things are wisely ordered," observed Miss Grizzy; "in that case, it may do dear Sir Sampson a great deal of good."

Just as this pleasing idea was suggested, Douglas and his father entered, and the ceremony of presenting her nephew to her friend was performed by Miss Grizzy in her most conciliating manner.

"Dear Lady Maclaughlan, this is your nephew Henry, who, I know, has the highest veneration for Sir Sampson and you. Henry, I assure you, Lady Maclaughlan takes the greatest interest in everything that concerns Lady Juliana and you."

"Humph!" rejoined her ladyship, as she surveyed him from head to foot: "so your wife fell in love with you, it seems: well, the more fool she; I never knew any good come of love marriages;—my first marriage was a love match—humph! my second was — humph!"

Douglas coloured, while he affected to laugh at this extraordinary address, and, withdrawing himself from her scrutiny, resumed his station by the side of his Juliana.

"Now, girls, I must go to my toilette; which of you am I to have for my handmaid?"

"Oh, we'll all go!" eagerly exclaimed the three nymphs; "our dear niece will excuse us for a little; young people are never at a loss to amuse one another."

"Venus and the Graces!" exclaimed Sir Sampson,

bowing with an air of gallantry; "and now I must go and adonise a little myself."

The company then separated, to perform the important offices of the toilet.

Chapter x.

Nature here

Wanton'd as in her prime, and played at will
Her virgin fancies.

MILTON.

THE gentlemen were already assembled round the drawing-room fire, impatiently waiting the hour of dinner, when Lady Maclaughlan and her three friends entered. The masculine habiliments of the morning had been exchanged for a more feminine costume. She was now arrayed in a pompadour satin negligée, and petticoat trimmed with Brussels lace. A high starched handkerchief formed a complete breastwork, on which, amidst a large bouquet of truly artificial roses, reposed a miniature of Sir Sampson, *à la militaire*. A small fly cap of antique lace was scarcely perceptible on the summit of a stupendous frizzled toupee, hemmed in on each side by large curls. The muff and stick had been relinquished for a large fan, something resembling an Indian skreen, which she waved to and fro in one hand, while a vast brocaded work-bag was suspended from the other.

"So, Major Douglas, your servant," said she, in answer to the constrained formal bow with which he saluted her on her entrance—"why, it's so long since I've seen you, that you may be a grandfather for aught I know."

The poor awkward Misses at that moment came sneaking into the room: "As for you, girls, you'll

never be grandmothers ; you'll never be married, unless to wild men of the woods. I suppose you'd like that ; it would save you the trouble of combing your hair, and tying your shoes, for then you could go without clothes altogether—humph ! you'd be much better without clothes than to put them on as you do," seizing upon the luckless Miss Baby, as she endeavoured to steal behind backs.

And here, in justice to the lady, it must be owned, that, for once, she had some grounds for animadversion in the dress and appearance of the Misses Douglas.

They had staid out, running races, and riding on a pony, until near the dinner hour ; and, dreading their father's displeasure should they be too late, they had, with the utmost haste, exchanged their thick morning dresses for thin muslin gowns, made, by a mantua-maker of the neighbourhood, in the extreme of a two-year-old fashion, when waists *were not*.

But as dame Nature had been particularly lavish in the length of theirs, and the staymaker had, according to their aunt's direction, given them *full measure* of their new dark stays, there existed a visible breach between the waists of their gowns and the bands of their petticoats, which they had vainly sought to adjust by a meeting. Their hair had been curled, but not combed ; and dark gloves had been hastily drawn on to hide red arms.

"I suppose," continued the stern Lady Maclaughlan, as she twirled her victim round and round ; "I suppose you think yourself vastly smart and well dressed. Yes, you are very neat, very neat indeed : one would suppose Ben Jonson had you in his eye when he composed that song" : Then in a voice like thunder, she chanted forth—

"Give me a look, give me a face
That makes simplicity a grace ;

Robes loosely flowing, hair as free,
Such sweet neglect more taketh me," &c., &c.

Miss Grizzy was in the utmost perplexity, between her inclination to urge something in extenuation for the poor girls, and her fear of dissenting from Lady Maclaughlan, or rather of not immediately agreeing with her; she, therefore, steered, as usual, the middle course, and kept saying, "Well, children, really what Lady Maclaughlan says, is all very true; at the same time," turning to her friend,—“I declare it's not much to be wondered at; young people are so thoughtless, poor lambs!”

“Thoughtless!” in a tone that struck a panic into poor Miss Grizzy's gentle breast. “Thoughtless! why, what have these girls to think about but lacing their stays and combing their hair? It don't signify what you wear,” continued she, addressing the culprits, as they sat in a corner, in all the various postures which awkwardness suggests—“I say, it don't signify what you wear, so as it's clean and well put on;—you would be more respectable figures in your father's nightcaps than with these mops.”

“What's a' this wark about?” said the old gentleman, angrily; “the girlics are weel enough; I see naething the matter wi' them—they're no dressed like auld queens, or stage-actresses”; and he glanced his eye from Lady Maclaughlan to his elegant daughter-in-law, who just then entered, hanging, according to custom, on her husband, and preceded by Cupid; Mrs Douglas followed, and the sound of the dinner-bell put a stop to the dispute.

“Come, my leddy, we'll see how the dinner's dressed,” said the laird, as he seized Lady Maclaughlan by the tip of the finger, and, holding it up aloft, they marched into the dining-room.

“Permit me, my Lady Juliana Douglas,” said the

little baronet, with much difficulty hobbling towards her, and attempting to take her hand—"Come, Harry, love; here Cupid," cried she; and, without noticing the enraged Sir Sampson, she passed on humming a tune, and leaning upon her husband.

"Astonishing! perfectly astonishing!" exclaimed the baronet; "how a young woman of Lady Juliana's rank and fashion should be guilty of such a solecism in good breeding.

"She is very young," said Mrs Douglas, smiling, as he limped along with her, "and you must make allowances for her; but, indeed, I think her beauty must ever be a sufficient excuse for any little errors she may commit, with a person of such taste and gallantry as Sir Sampson Maclaughlan."

The little baronet smiled, pressed the hand he held; and, soothed by the well-timed compliment, he seated himself next to Lady Juliana with some complacency. As she insisted on having her husband on the other side, Mr Douglas was condemned to take his station by the hated Lady Maclaughlan, who, for the first time, observing Mrs Douglas, called to her,—

"Come here, my love; I hav'n't seen you these hundred years"; then, seizing her face between her hands, she saluted her in the usual style: "There," at length releasing Mrs Douglas from her gripe—"there's for you; I love you very much; you're neither a fool nor a hoyden; you're a fine intelligent being."

Having carefully rolled up and deposited her gloves in her pocket, she pulled out a pincushion, and calling Miss Bella, desired her to pin her napkin over her shoulder; which done, she began to eat her soup in silence.

Peace was, however, of short duration. Old Donald, on removing a dish of whipt cream, unfortunately overturned one upon Lady Maclaughlan's pompadour satin

petticoat; the only part of her dress that was unprotected.

"Do you see what you have done, you old Donald!" cried she, seizing the culprit by the sleeve; "why, you've got St Vitus's dance—a fit hand to carry whipt cream, to be sure! why, I could as well carry a custard on the point of a bayonet—humph!"

"Dear me, Donald, how could you be so senseless!" cried Miss Jacky.

"Preserve me, Donald, I thought you had more sense!" squeaked Miss Nicky.

"I am sure, Donald, that was not like you!" said Miss Grizzy, as the friends all flocked around the petticoat, each suggesting a different remedy.

"It's all of you, girls, that this has happened: why can't you have a larger table-cloth upon your table?—and that old man has the palsy; why don't you electrify him?" in a tone admirably calculated to have that effect.

"I declare it's all very true," observed Miss Grizzy; "the table-cloth *is* very small, and Donald certainly *does* shake,—that cannot be denied;" but, lowering her voice, "he is so obstinate, we really don't know what to do with him; my sisters and I attempted to use the flesh-brush with him."

"Oh, and an excellent thing it is; I make Philistine rub Sir Sampson every morning and night. If it was not for that and his cough, nobody would know whether he were dead or alive; I don't believe he would know himself—humph!"

Sir Sampson's lemon face assumed an orange hue, as he overheard this domestic detail; but, not daring to contradict the facts, he prudently turned a deaf ear to them, and attempted to carry on a flirtation with Lady Juliana, through the medium of Cupid, whom he had coaxed upon his knee.

Dinner being at length ended, toasts succeeded ; and each of the ladies having given her favourite laird, the signal of retreat was given, and a general movement took place.

Lady Juliana, throwing herself upon a sofa, with her pugs, called Mrs Douglas to her : " Do sit down here, and talk with me," yawned she.

Her sister-in-law, with great good humour, fetched her work, and seated herself by the spoilt child.

" What strange thing is that you are making ? " asked she, as Mrs Douglas pulled out her knitting.

" A child's stocking," replied her sister-in-law.

" A child's stocking ! Oh, by the bye, have you a great many children ? "

" I have none," answered Mrs Douglas, with a half-stifled sigh.

" None at all ! " repeated Lady Juliana, with surprise ; " then why do you make children's stockings ? "

" I make them for those whose parents cannot afford to purchase them."

" La ! what poor wretches they must be that can't afford to buy stockings," rejoined Lady Juliana with a yawn ; " its monstrous good of you to make them, to be sure ; but it must be a shocking bore ! and such a trouble ! " and another long yawn succeeded.

" Not half such a bore to me as to sit idle," returned Mrs Douglas, with a smile ; " nor nearly so much trouble as you undergo with your favourite."

Lady Juliana made no reply, but, turning from her sister-in-law, soon was, or affected to be, sound asleep, from which she was only roused by the entrance of the gentlemen.

" A rubber or a reel, my leddy ? " asked the laird, going up to his daughter-in-law.

" Julia, love," said her husband, " my father asks you if you choose cards or dancing."

"There's nobody to dance with," said she, casting a languid glance around ; "I'll play at cards."

"Not whist, surely !" said Henry.

"Whist ! oh, no."

"Weel, weel, you youngsters will get a round game ; come, my Leddy MacLaughlan, Grizzy, Mrs Douglas, hey for the odd trick and the honours !"

"What would your ladyship choose to play at ?" asked Miss Jacky, advancing with a pack of cards in one hand, and a box of counters in the other.

"Oh, any thing ; I like loo very well, or quadrille, or—I really don't care what."

The Misses, who had gathered round, and were standing gaping in joyful expectation of Pope Joan, or a pool at commerce, here exchanged sorrowful glances.

"I am afraid the young people don't play at these games," replied Miss Jacky ; "but we've counters enough," shaking her little box, "for Pope Joan, and we all know that."

"Pope Joan ! I never heard of such a game," replied Lady Juliana.

"Oh, we can soon learn you," said Miss Nicky, who, having spread the green cloth on the tea-table, now advanced to join the consultation.

"I hate to be taught," said Lady Juliana with a yawn ; "besides, I am sure it must be something very stupid."

"Ask if she plays commerce," whispered Miss Bella to Miss Baby.

The question was put, but with no better success, and the young ladies' faces again bespoke their disappointment ; which their brother observing, he good-naturedly declared his perfect knowledge of commerce ; "and I must insist upon teaching you, Juliana," gently dragging her to the table.

"What's the pool to be?" asked one of the young ladies.

"I'm sure I don't know," said the aunts, looking to each other.

"I suppose we must make it sixpence," said Miss Jacky, after a whispering consultation with her sister.

"In that case we can afford nothing to the best hand," observed Miss Nicky. "And we ought to have seven lives and grace," added one of the nieces.

These points having been conceded, the preliminaries were at length settled. The cards were slowly *doled* out by Miss Jacky; and Lady Juliana was carefully instructed in the rules of the game, and strongly recommended always to try for a sequence, or pairs, &c. "And if you win," rejoined Miss Nicky, shaking the snuffer-stand in which was deposited the sixpences, "you get all this."

As may be conjectured, Lady Juliana's patience could not survive more than one life: she had no notion of playing for sixpences, and could not be at the trouble to attend to any instructions; she therefore quickly retired in disgust, leaving the aunts and nieces to struggle for the glorious prize.

"My dear child, you played that last stroke like a perfect natural," cried Lady Maclaughlan to Miss Grizzy, as, the rubber ended, they arose from the table.

"Indeed, I declare, I dare say I did," replied her friend, in a deprecating tone.

"Dare say you did! I know you did—humph! I knew the ace lay with you; I knew that as well as if I had seen it. I suppose you have eyes—but I don't know; if you have, didn't you see Glenfern turn up the king, and yet you returned his lead—returned your adversary's lead in the face of his king. I've been telling you these twenty years not to return your adver-

sary's lead ; nothing can be more despicable ; nothing can be a greater proof of imbecility of mind—humph !” Then, seating herself, she began to exercise her fan with considerable activity. “This has been the most disagreeable day I ever spent in this house, girls. I don't know what's come over you, but you are all wrong ! my petticoat's ruined ; my pocket's picked at cards ;—it won't do, girls—it won't do—humph !”

“I am sure, I can't understand it,” said Miss Grizzy, in a rueful accent ; “there really appears to have been some fatality”——

“Fatality !—humph ! I wish you would give every thing its right name. What do you mean by fatality ?”

“I declare—I am sure—I—I really don't know,” stammered the unfortunate Grizzy.

“Do you mean that the spilling of the custard was the work of an angel ?” demanded her unrelenting friend.

“Oh, certainly not.”

“Or that it was an evil one tempted you to throw away your ace there ? I suppose there's a fatality in our going to supper just now,” continued she, as her deep-toned voice resounded through the passage that conducted to the dining-room ; “and I suppose it will be called a fatality if that old Fate,” pointing to Donald, “scalds me to death with that mess of porridge he's going to put on the table—humph !”

No such fatality, however, occurred ; and the rest of the evening passed off in as much harmony as could be expected from the very heterogeneous parts of which the society was formed.

Chapter xj.

O thoughtless mortals, ever blind to fate,
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate,
Sudden these honours shall be snatch'd away!

Pope.

What virgins these in speechless woe
That bend to earth their solemn brow?

Gray.

THE family group had already assembled round the breakfast table, with the exception of Lady Juliana, who chose to take that meal in bed: but, contrary to her usual custom, no Lady MacLaughlan had yet made her appearance. All was busy speculation and surmise as to the *could-be* cause of this lapse of time on the part of that hitherto most perfect of morning chronometers. Scouts had been sent ever and anon to spy, to peep, to listen; but nothing was brought back but idle guesses and shallow conjectures. It had, however, been clearly ascertained that Sir Sampson had been heard to cough and find fault with Murdoch in the dressing-room, and Lady MacLaughlan to humph! in her sternal tone, as she walked to and fro in her chamber. So far all was well. But for Lady MacLaughlan still to be in her chamber twenty minutes after the breakfast-bell had rung—'twas strange—'twas passing strange!

"The scones will be like leather," said Miss Grizzy, in her most doleful accent, as she wrapped another napkin round them.

"The eggs will be like snow-balls," cried Miss Jacky, warmly, popping them into the slop-basin.

"The tea will be like brandy," observed Miss Nicky, sharply, as she poured more water to the three tea spoonfuls she had infused.

"I wish we saw our breakfast," said the laird, as he finished the newspapers, and deposited his spectacles in his pocket.

"It *is* rather hard to be kept starving all day for that——," said Mr Douglas, as he swallowed a slice of cold beef, that carried the conclusion of the sentence along with it.

At that moment the door opened, and the person in question entered in her travelling dress, followed by Sir Sampson; Philistine bringing up the rear, with a large green bag and a little band-box under his arm.

"Good morning, dear Lady Maclaughlan! Good morning, dear Sir Sampson! We are all delighted to see you—we were beginning to get a little uneasy, for you are always so punctual!—but you are in charming time—neither too soon nor too late," immediately burst as if from a thousand voices, while the sisters officially fluttered round their friend.

"Humph;" quoth the lady.

"I hope your bed was warm and comfortable?"

"I hope you rested well?"

"I hope Sir Sampson had a good night?" immediately burst as from a thousand voices.

"I rested very ill; my bed was very uncomfortable; and Sir Sampson's as yellow as a duck's foot—humph!"

Three disconsolate "Bless me's!" here burst forth.

"Perhaps your bed was too hard?" said Miss Grizzy.

"Or too soft?" suggested Miss Jacky.

"Or too hot?" added Miss Nicky.

"It was neither too hard, nor too soft, nor too hot, nor too cold," thundered the lady, as she seated herself at the table; "but it was all of them."

"I declare, that's most distressing," said Miss Grizzy, in a tone of sorrowful amazement. "Was your head high enough, dear Lady Maclaughlan?"

"Perhaps it was too high," said Miss Jacky.

"I know nothing more disagreeable than a high head," remarked Miss Nicky.

"Except a fool's head—humph !

"Now my weary lips I close ;
Leave me, leave me to repose."

And she betook herself to the business of the morning with the air of one who was determined to utter no more till that was despatched. There was something so portentous in the tone and responses of their oracle, that, inquisitive as the sisters were, still they were not so pertinacious in their curiosity as King Odin : for once on a time, therefore, all three were silenced in a breath, and a pause of mute consternation ensued.

Soon, however, the sound of a carriage broke the solemn stillness, and set all ears on full stretch, when presently the well-known pea-green drew up.

"Dear me ! Bless me ! Goodness me !" shrieked the three ladies at once. "Surely, Lady Maclaughlan, you can't—you don't—you won't—this must be a mistake ?"

"There's no mistake in the matter, girls," replied their friend, with her accustomed *sang froid*. "I'm going home ; so I ordered the carriage ; that's all—humph !"

"Going home !" faintly murmured the disconsolate spinisters.

"What ! I suppose you think I ought to stay here and have another petticoat spoiled ; or lose another half-crown at cards ; or have the finishing stroke put to Sir Sampson ; or see you all turned into Bedlamites—humph !"

"Oh, Lady Maclaughlan !" was three times uttered in reproachful accents.

"I don't know what else I should stay for : you are

not yourselves, girls; you've all turned topsy-turvy. I've visited here these twenty years, and I never saw things in the state they are now—humph?"

"I declare it's very true," sighed Miss Grizzy; "we certainly are a little in confusion,—that can't be denied."

"Denied! why, you might as well deny that you ever were born!"

"Oh, Lady Maclaughlan!" exclaimed Grizzy, in great trepidation; "I'm sure nobody would ever deny that!"

"Can you deny that my petticoat has been ruined?"

"It will dye," said Nicky.

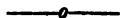
"So will you," thundered the lady, proceeding in her interrogatories. "Can you deny that my pocket has been picked of half-a-crown? Can you deny that Sir Sampson has been half poisoned? Can you deny that you have all been very disagreeable?"

"My Lady Maclaughlan!" gasped Sir Sampson, who had hitherto been choking under the affront put upon his complexion,—*"I—I—I—am surprised—I am shocked—I won't suffer this—I can't stand such"*—and pushing away his tea-cup, he rose, and limped to the window. Murdoch now entered to inform his mistress that "every thing was ready."—"Steady, boys, steady! *I* always am ready," responded the lady in a tone adapted to the song. "Now I am ready—say nothing, girls—you know my rules.—Here, Philistine, wrap up Sir Sampson, and put him in.—Get along, my love.—Good bye, girls; and I hope you will all be restored to your right senses soon."

"Oh, Lady Maclaughlan!" whined the weeping Grizzy, as she embraced her friend, who, somewhat melted at the signs of her distress, bawled out from the carriage, as the door was shut, "Well, good bye, dear girls, and may ye all become what ye have been; and

you must some of you come to Loch Marlie soon, and bring your pretty niece and your five senses along with you : now no more at present from your affectionate friend."

The carriage then drove off, and the three disconsolate sisters returned to the parlour, to hold a cabinet council as to the causes of the late disasters.



Chapter xij.

If there be cure or charm
To respite or relieve, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion.

MILTON.

TIME, which generally alleviates ordinary distresses, served only to augment the severity of Lady Juliana's, as day after day rolled heavily on, and found her still an inmate of Glenfern Castle. Destitute of every resource in herself, she yet turned with contempt from the scanty sources of occupation or amusement that were suggested by others ; and Mrs Douglas's attempts to teach her to play at chess and read Shakspeare were as unsuccessful as the endeavours of the good aunts to persuade her to study Fordyce's Sermons and make baby-linen.

In languid dejection, or fretful repinings, did the unhappy beauty therefore consume the tedious hours, while her husband sought alternately to soothe with fondness he no longer felt, or flatter with hopes which he knew to be groundless. To his father alone he could now look for any assistance, and from him he was not likely to obtain it in the form he desired ; as the old gentleman repeatedly declared his utter inability to advance him any ready money, or to allow him more

than a hundred a year, moreover to be paid quarterly; a sum which could not defray their expenses to London.

Such was the state of affairs, when the laird one morning entered the dining-room with a face of much importance, and addressed his son with—"Weel, Harry, you're a lucky man; and it's an ill wind that blows naebody gude: here's poor Macglashan gone like snow off a dike."

"Macglashan gone!" exclaimed Miss Grizzy. "Impossible, brother; it was only yesterday I sent him a large blister for his back!"

"And I," said Miss Jacky, "talked to him for upwards of two hours last night, on the impropriety of his allowing his daughter to wear white gowns on Sunday."

"By my troth, an' that was enugh to kill any man," muttered the laird.

"How I am to derive any benefit from this important demise is more than I can perceive," said Henry, in a somewhat contemptuous tone.

"You see," replied his father, "that, by our agreement, his farm falls vacant in consequence."

"And I hope I am to succeed to it?" replied the son, with a smile of derision.

"Exactly. By my troth, but you have a bein down-set. There's three thousand and seventy-five acres of as good sheep-walk as any in the whole country-side; and I shall advance you stocking and steding, and every thing complete, to your very peat-stacks. What think ye of that?" slapping his son's shoulder, and rubbing his own hands with delight as he spoke.

Horror-struck at a scheme which appeared to him a thousand times worse than any thing his imagination had ever painted, poor Henry stood in speechless consternation; while "charming! excellent! delightful!"

was echoed by the aunts, as they crowded round, wishing him joy, and applauding their brother's generosity.

"What will our sweet niece say to this, I wonder," said the innocent Grizzly, who in truth wondered none. "I would like to see her face when she hears it;" and her own was puckered into various shapes of delight.

"I have no doubt but her good sense will teach her to appreciate properly the blessings of her lot," observed the more reflecting Jacky.

"She has had her own good luck," quoth the sententious Nicky, "to find such a down-set all cut and dry."

At that instant the door opened, and the favoured individual in question entered. In vain Douglas strove to impose silence on his father and aunts. The latter sat, bursting with impatience to break out into exclamation; while the former, advancing to his fair daughter-in-law, saluted her as "Lady Clachandow!" Then the torrent burst forth; and, stupefied with surprise, Lady Juliana suffered herself to be kissed and hugged by the whole host of aunts and nieces; while the very walls seemed to reverberate the shouts; and the pugs and mackaw, who never failed to take part in every commotion, began to bark and scream in chorus.

The old gentleman, clapping his hands to his ears, rushed out of the room. His son, execrating his aunts, and every thing around him, kicked Cupid, and gave the mackaw a box on the ear, as he also quitted the apartment, with more appearance of anger than he had ever yet betrayed.

The tumult at length began to subside. The mackaw's screams gave place to a low quivering croak; and the insulted pug's yells yielded to a gentle whine. The aunts' obstreperous joy began to be chastened with fear for the consequences that might follow an abrupt disclosure; and, while Lady Juliana condoled with her

favourites, it was concerted between the prudent aunts that the joyful news should be broke to their niece in the most cautious manner possible. For that purpose, Misses Grizzy and Jacky seated themselves on each side of her; and, after duly preparing their voices by sundry small hems, Miss Grizzy thus began:—

“I’m sure—I declare—I dare say, my dear Lady Juliana, you must think we are all distracted.”

Her auditor made no attempt to contradict the supposition.

“We certainly ought, to be sure, to have been more cautious; but the joy—though, indeed, it seems cruel to say so,—and I am sure you will sympathise, my dear niece, in the cause, when you hear that it is occasioned by poor Macglashan’s death, which, I’m sure, was quite unexpected. Indeed, I declare I can’t conceive how it came about; for Lady MacLaughlan, who is an excellent judge of these things, thought he was really a remarkable stout-looking man for his time of life; and indeed, except occasional colds, which you know we are all subject to, I really never knew him complain. At the same time there can be no doubt”——

“I don’t think, sister, you are taking the right method of communicating the intelligence to our niece,” said Miss Jacky.

“You cannot communicate any thing that would give me the least pleasure, unless you could tell me that I was going to leave this place,” cried Lady Juliana, in a voice of deep despondency.

“Indeed! if it can afford your ladyship so much pleasure to be at liberty to quit the hospitable mansion of your amiable husband’s respectable father,” said Miss Jacky, with an inflamed visage and outspread hands, “you are at perfect liberty to depart when you think proper. The generosity, I may say the munificence,

of my excellent brother, has now put it in your power to do as you please, and to form your own plans."

"Oh, delightful!" exclaimed Lady Juliana, starting up; "now I shall be quite happy. Where's Harry? Does he know?—is he gone to order the carriage?—can we get away to-day?" And she was flying out of the room, when Miss Jacky caught her by one hand, while Miss Grizzy secured the other.

"Oh, pray don't detain me! I must find Harry; and I have all my things to put up," struggling to release herself from the gripe of the sisters; when the door opened, and Harry entered, eager, yet dreading, to know the effects of the *eclaircissement*. His surprise was extreme at beholding his wife, with her eyes sparkling, her cheeks glowing, and her whole countenance expressing extreme pleasure. Darting from her keepers, she bounded towards him with the wildest ejaculations of delight; while he stood alternately gazing at her and his aunts, seeking, by his eyes, the explanation he feared to demand.

"My dearest Juliana, what is the meaning of all this?" he at length articulated.

"Oh, you cunning thing! So you think I don't know that your father has given you a great—great quantity of money, and that we may go away whenever we please, and do just as we like, and live in London, and—and—Oh, delightful!" And she bounded and skipped before the eyes of the petrified spinsters.

"What does all this mean?" asked Henry, addressing his aunts, who, for the first time in their lives, were struck dumb by astonishment. But Miss Jacky, at length recollecting herself, turned to Lady Juliana, who was still testifying her delight by a variety of childish but graceful movements, and thus addressed her:—

"Permit me to put a few questions to your ladyship,

in presence of those who were witnesses of what has already passed."

"Oh, I can't endure to be asked questions; besides, I have no time to answer them."

"Your ladyship must excuse me; but I can't permit you to leave this room under the influence of an error. Have the goodness to answer me the following questions, and you will then be at liberty to depart:—Did I inform your ladyship that my brother had given my nephew a great quantity of money?"

"Oh, yes—a great, great deal—I don't know how much, though"——

"Did I?" returned her interrogator.

"Come, come, have done with all this nonsense!" exclaimed Henry passionately. "Do you imagine I will allow Lady Juliana to stand here all day, to answer all the absurd questions that come into the heads of three old women? You stupefy and bewilder her with your eternal tattling and round-about harangues." And he paced the room in a paroxysm of rage, whilst his wife suspended her dancing, and stood in breathless amazement.

"I declare—I'm sure—it's a thousand pities that there should have been any mistake made, and I can't conceive how it has happened," whined poor Miss Grizzly.

"The only remedy is to explain the matter quickly," observed Miss Nicky; "better late than never."

"I have done," said Miss Jacky, seating herself with much dignity.

"The short and the long of it is this," said Miss Nicky: "my brother has not made Henry a present of money. I assure you, money is not so rife; but he has done what is much better for you both,—he has made over to him that fine thriving farm of poor Macglashan's."

"No money!" repeated Lady Juliana, in a disconsolate tone: then quickly brightening up, "It would have been better, to be sure, to have had the money directly; but you know we can easily sell the estate. How long will it take?—a week?"

"Sell Clachandown!" exclaimed the three horror-struck daughters of the house of Douglas. "Sell Clachandown! Oh! Oh! Oh!"

"What else could we do with it?" inquired her ladyship.

"Live at it, to be sure," cried all three.

"Live at it!" repeated she, with a shriek of horror that vied with that of the spinsters—"Live at it! Live on a thriving farm! Live all my life in such a place as this! Oh! the very thought is enough to kill me!"

"There is no occasion to think or say any more about it," interrupted Henry, in a calmer tone; and, glancing round on his aunts, "I therefore desire no more may be said on the subject."

"And is this really all? And have you got no money? And are we not going away?" gasped the disappointed Lady Juliana, as she gave way to a violent burst of tears, that terminated in a fit of hysterics; at sight of which, the good spinsters entirely forgot their wrath; and, while one burnt feathers under her nose, and another held her hands, a third drenched her in floods of Lady MacLaughlan's hysteric water. After going through the regular routine, the lady's paroxysm subsided; and, being carried to bed, she soon sobbed herself into a feverish slumber; in which state the harassed husband left her, to attend a summons from his father.

Chapter xii.

Haply this life is best,
 Sweetest to you, well corresponding
 With your stiff age ; but unto us it is
 A cell of ignorance, a prison for a debtor.

Cymbeline.

HE found the old gentleman in no very complaisant humour, from the disturbances that had taken place, but the chief cause of which he was still in ignorance of. He therefore accosted his son with—

“What was the meaning o’ a’ that skirling and squeeling I heard a while ago? By my troth, there’s no bearing this din! Thae beasts o’ your wife’s are enough to drive a man out of his senses. But she maun gie up thae maggots when she becomes a farmer’s wife. She maun get stirks and stots to make pets o’, if she maun hae *four-footed* favourites; but, to my mind, it would set her better to be carrying a wise-like wean in her arms, than trailing about wi’ senseless dougs an’ paurits.”

Henry coloured, bit his lips, but made no reply to this elegant address of his father’s; who continued, “I sent for you, sir, to have some conversation about this farm of Macglashan’s; so sit down there, till I show you the plans.”

Hardly conscious of what he was doing, poor Henry gazed in silent confusion, as his father pointed out the various properties of this his future possession. Wholly occupied in debating within himself how he was to decline the offer, without a downright quarrel, he heard, without understanding a word, all the old gentleman’s plans and proposals for building dikes, draining moss, &c.; and, perfectly unconscious of what he was doing, yielded a ready assent to all the improvements that were suggested.

"Then as for the house and offices—let me see," continued the laird, as he rolled up the plans of the farm, and pulled forth that of the dwelling-house, from a bundle of papers: "Ay, here it is. By my troth, ye'll be weel lodged here. The house is in a manner quite new, for it has never had a brush upon it yet. And there's a byre—fient a bit, if I would mean the best man i' the country to sleep there himsel."

A pause followed, during which Glenfern was busily employed in poring over his parchment; then taking off his spectacles, and surveying his son, "And now, sir, that you've heard a' the outs and ins of the business, what think you your farm should bring you at the year's end?"

"I—I—I'm sure—I—I don't know," stammered poor Henry, awakening from his reverie.

"Come, come, gie a guess."

"I really—I cannot—I haven't the least idea."

"I desire, sir, ye'll say something directly, that I may judge whether or no ye have common sense," cried the old gentleman angrily.

"I should suppose—I imagine—I don't suppose it will exceed seven or eight hunder a year," said his son, in the greatest trepidation at this trial of his intellect.

"Seven or eight hunder a year!" cried the incensed laird, starting up and pushing his papers from him; "by my troth, I believe ye're a born idiot! Seven or eight hunder a year!" repeated he, at least a dozen times, as he whisked up and down the little apartment with extraordinary velocity, while poor Henry affected to be busily employed in gathering up the parchments with which the floor was strewn.

"I'll tell you what, sir," continued he, stopping; "you're no fit to manage a farm; you're as ignorant as yon cow, an' as senseless as its calf. Wi' gude management, Clachadow should produce you twa hunder and

odd pounds yearly, wi' a free house, and plenty of peats, mutton, and patatees into the bargain ; but, in your guiding, I doubt if it will yield the half of what it should do. However, tak it or want it, mind me, sir, that it's a' ye hae to trust to in my lifetime ; so ye may mak the maist o't."

Various and painful were the emotions that struggled in Henry's breast at this declaration. Shame, regret, indignation, all burned within him ; but the fear he entertained of his father, and the consciousness of his absolute dependence, chained his tongue, while the bitter emotions that agitated him painted themselves legibly in his countenance. His father observed his agitation ; and, mistaking the cause, felt somewhat softened at what he conceived his son's shame and penitence for his folly : he therefore extended his hand towards him, saying, "Weel, weel, nae mair aboot it ; Clachadow's yours, as soon as I can put you in possession : in the mean time, stay still here, and welcome."

"I — am much obliged to you for the offer, sir ; I — feel very grateful for your kindness," at length articulated his son ; "but — I — am, as you observe, so perfectly ignorant of country matters, that I — I — in short, I am afraid I should make a bad hand of the business."

"Nae doot, nae doot ye would, if ye was left to your ain discretion ; but ye'll get mair sense, and I shall put ye upon a method, and provide ye wi' a grieve ; an' if you are active, and your wife managing, there's nae fear o' you."

"But Lady Juliana, sir, has never been accustomed" —

"Let her serve an apprenticeship to your aunts ; she cou'dna be in a better school."

"But her education, sir, has been so different from what would be required in that station," resumed her

husband, choking with vexation at the idea of his beautiful high-born bride being doomed to the drudgery of household cares.

"Education! what has her education been, to make her different from other women? If a woman can nurse her bairns, make their clothes, and manage her house, what more need she do? If she can play a tune on the spinnet, and dance a reel, and play a rubber at whist—no doubt these are accomplishments, but they're soon learnt. Education! pooh!—I'll be bound Lady Julia Anie will make as good a figure by and by as the best educated woman in the country."

"But she dislikes the country, and"—

"She'll soon come to like it. Wait a wee till she has a wheen bairns, and a house of her ain, and I'll be bound she'll be as happy as the day's lang."

"But the climate does not agree with her," continued the tender husband, almost driven to extremities by the persevering simplicity of his father.

"Stay a wee till she gets to Clachadow! There's no finer, freer-aired situation in all Scotland: the air's sharpish, to be sure, but fine and bracing; and you have a braw peat moss at your back to keep you warm."

Finding it in vain to attempt *insinuating* his objections to a pastoral life, poor Henry was at length reduced to the necessity of coming to the point with the old gentleman, and telling him plainly, that it was not at all suited to his inclinations, or Lady Juliana's rank and beauty.

Vain would be the attempt to paint the fiery wrath and indignation of the ancient Highlander, as the naked truth stood revealed before him:—that his son despised the occupation of his fathers, even the feeding of sheep, and the breeding of black cattle; and that his high-born spouse was above fulfilling those duties which

he had ever considered the chief end for which woman was created. He swore, stamped, screamed, and even skipped with rage, and, in short, went through all the evolutions, as usually performed by testy old gentlemen on first discovering that they have disobedient sons and undutiful daughters. Henry, who, though uncommonly good tempered, inherited a portion of his father's warmth, became at length irritated at the invectives that were so liberally bestowed on him, and replied in language less respectful than the old laird was accustomed to hear; and the altercation became so violent, that they parted in mutual anger; Henry returning to his wife's apartment in a state of the greatest disquietude he had ever known. To her childish questions and tiresome complaints he no longer vouchsafed to reply, but paced the chamber with a disordered mien, in sullen silence; till at length, distracted by her reproaches, and disgusted with her selfishness, he rushed from the apartment, and quitted the house.

Chapter xiv.

Never talk to me; I *will* weep.

As You Like It.

TWICE had the dinner-bell been loudly sounded by old Donald, and the family of Glenfern were all assembled, yet their fashionable guests had not appeared. Impatient of delay, Miss Jacky hastened to ascertain the cause. Presently she returned in the utmost perturbation, and announced, that Lady Juliana was in bed in a high fever, and Henry nowhere to be found. Thereupon the whole eight rushed upstairs to ascertain the fact, leaving the old gentleman much discomposed at this unseasonable delay.

Some time elapsed ere they again returned, which they did with lengthened faces, and in extreme perturbation. They had found their noble niece, according to Miss Jacky's report, in bed—according to Miss Grizzy's opinion, in a brain fever; as she no sooner perceived them enter, than she covered her head with the bed-clothes, and continued screaming for them to be gone, till they had actually quitted the apartment.

"And what proves, beyond a doubt, that our sweet niece is not herself," continued poor Miss Grizzy, in a lamentable tone, "is, that we appeared to her in every form but our own! She sometimes took us for cats; then thought we were ghosts haunting her; and, in short, it is impossible to tell all the things she called us; and she screams so for Harry to come and take her away, that I am sure—I declare—I don't know what's come over her!"

Mrs Douglas could scarcely suppress a smile at the simplicity of the good spinsters. Her husband and she had gone out, immediately after breakfast, to pay a visit a few miles off, and did not return till near the dinner hour. They were therefore ignorant of all that had been acted during their absence; but, as she suspected something was amiss, she requested the rest of the company would proceed to dinner, and leave her to ascertain the nature of Lady Juliana's disorder.

"Don't come near me!" shrieked her ladyship, on hearing the door open: "send Henry to take me away—I don't want any body but Henry!"—and a torrent of tears, sobs, and exclamations followed.

"My dear Lady Juliana," said Mrs Douglas, softly approaching the bed, "compose yourself; and if my presence is disagreeable to you, I will immediately withdraw."

"Oh, is it you?" cried her sister-in-law, uncovering her face at the sound of her voice: "I thought it

had been those frightful old women come to torment me; and I shall die—I know I shall—if ever I look at them again. But I don't dislike *you*; so you may stay if you choose,—though I don't want any body but Harry, to come and take me away."

A fresh fit of sobbing here impeded her utterance; and Mrs Douglas, compassionating her distress, while she despised her folly, seated herself by the bedside, and, taking her hand, in the sweetest tone of sympathy attempted to soothe her into composure. But it was long ere the words of wisdom and kindness could win their way into ears closed against all but her own passionate exclamations and incoherent expressions of grief, anger, disappointment, and injury. From these, any one ignorant of the real state of the case might reasonably have inferred that she was an unhappy lady who had been basely trepanned from her beloved home, and taken captive to a barbarous country, where she was undergoing every species of cruelty and oppression her inhuman persecutors could invent or inflict. Having at length exhausted herself in the detail of her wrongs and sufferings, Mrs Douglas spoke a few words of consolation, which were received with tolerable composure. She then proceeded, in her own mild accents, to use such reasonable arguments as she thought adapted even to the weak capacity she was endeavouring to enlighten.

"The only way in which you can be less miserable, is to support your present situation with patience, which you may do by looking forward to brighter prospects. It is *possible* that your stay here may be short; and it is *certain* that it is in your own power to render your life more agreeable, by endeavouring to accommodate yourself to the peculiarities of your husband's family. No doubt, they are often tiresome and ridiculous; but they are always kind and well-meaning."

"You may say what you please, but I think them all

odious creatures ; and I won't live here with patience ; and I shan't be agreeable to them ; and all the talking in the world won't make me less miserable. If you were me, you would be just the same ; but you have never been in London—that's the reason."

"Pardon me," replied her sister-in-law, "I spent many years of my life there."

"You lived in London !" repeated Lady Juliana, in astonishment. "And how then can you contrive to exist here ?"

"I not only contrive to exist, but to be extremely contented with existence," said Mrs Douglas, with a smile. Then assuming a more serious air, "I possess health, peace of mind, and the affections of a worthy husband ; and I should be very undeserving of these blessings, were I to give way to useless regrets, or indulge in impious repinings, because my happiness might once have been more perfect, and still admits of improvement."

"I don't understand you," said Lady Juliana, with a peevish yawn. "Who did you live with in London ?"

"With my aunt, Lady Audley."

"With Lady Audley !" repeated her sister-in-law, in accents of astonishment. "Why, I have heard of her ; she lived quite in the world, and gave balls and assemblies ; so that's the reason you are not so disagreeable as the rest of them. Why did you not remain with her, or marry an Englishman ?—but I suppose, like me, you didn't know what Scotland was !"

Happy to have excited an interest, even through the medium of childish curiosity, in the bosom of her fashionable relative, Mrs Douglas briefly related such circumstances of her past life as she judged proper to communicate ; but as she sought rather to amuse than instruct by her simple narrative, we shall allow her to

pursue her charitable intentions, while we do more justice to her character by introducing her regularly to the acquaintance of our readers.

HISTORY OF MRS DOUGLAS.

"The selfish heart deserves the pang it feels;
More generous sorrow, while it sinks, exalts,
And conscious virtue mitigates the pang." YOUNG.

Mrs Douglas was, on the maternal side, related to an English family. Her mother had died in giving birth to her; and her father, shortly after, falling in the service of his country, she had been consigned in infancy to the care of her aunt. Lady Audley had taken charge of her, on condition that she should never be claimed by her Scottish relations, for whom that lady entertained as much aversion as contempt. A latent feeling of affection for her departed sister, and a large portion of family pride, had prompted her wish of becoming the protectress of her orphan niece; and, possessed of a high sense of rectitude and honour, she fulfilled the duty, thus voluntarily imposed, in a manner that secured the unshaken gratitude of the virtuous Alicia.

Lady Audley was a character more esteemed and feared than loved, even by those with whom she was most intimate. Firm, upright, and rigid, she exacted from others those inflexible virtues which in herself she found no obstacle to performing. Neglecting the softer attractions which shed their benign influence over the commerce of social life, she was content to enjoy the extorted esteem of her associates; for friends she had none. She sought in the world for objects to fill up the void which her heart could not supply. She loved *eclat*, and had succeeded in creating herself an existence of importance in the circles of high life, which she

considered more as due to her consequence than essential to her enjoyment. She had early in life been left a widow, with the sole tutelage and management of an only son; whose large estate she regulated with the most admirable prudence and judgment.

Alicia Malcolm was put under the care of her aunt at two years of age. A governess had been procured for her, whose character was such as not to impair the promising dispositions of her pupil. Alicia was gifted by nature with a warm affectionate heart, and a calm imagination attempered its influence. Her governess, a woman of a strong understanding and enlarged mind, early instilled into her a deep and strong sense of religion; and to it she owed the support which had safely guided her through the most trying vicissitudes.

When at the age of seventeen, Alicia Malcolm was produced in the world. She was a rational, cheerful, and sweet-tempered girl, with a fine-formed person, and a countenance in which was so clearly painted the sunshine of her breast, that it attracted the *bienveillance* even of those who had not taste or judgment to define the charm. Her open natural manner, blending the frankness of the Scotch with the polished reserve of the English woman, her total exemption from vanity, were calculated alike to please others, and maintain her own cheerfulness undimmed by a single cloud.

Lady Audley felt for her niece a sentiment which she mistook for affection; her self-approbation was gratified at the contemplation of a being who owed every advantage to her, and whom she had rescued from the coarseness and vulgarity which she deemed inseparable from the manners of every Scotch woman.

If Lady Audley really loved any human being, it was her son. In him were centred her dearest interests; on his aggrandisement and future importance hung her most sanguine hopes. She had acted con-

trary to the advice of her male relations, and followed her own judgment, by giving her son a private education. He was brought up under her own eye, by a tutor of deep erudition, but who was totally unfitted for forming the mind and compensating for those advantages which may be derived from a public education. The circumstances of his education, therefore, combined rather to stifle the exposure than to destroy the existence of some very dangerous qualities, that seemed inherent in Sir Edmund's nature. He was ardent, impetuous, and passionate, though these propensities were cloaked by a reserve, partly natural, and partly arising from the repelling manners of his mother and tutor.

His was not the effervescence of character which bursts forth on every trivial occasion; but when any powerful cause awakened the slumbering inmates of his breast, they blazed with an uncontrolled fury, that defied all opposition, and overleaped all bounds of reason and decorum.

Experience often shows us, that minds formed of the most opposite attributes more forcibly attract each other than those which appear cast in the same mould. The source of this fascination is difficult to trace: it possesses not reason for its basis, yet it is perhaps the more tyrannical in its influence from that very cause. The weakness of our nature occasionally makes us feel a potent charm in "errors of a noble mind."

Sir Edmund Audley and Alicia Malcolm proved examples of this observation. The affection of childhood had so gradually ripened into a warmer sentiment, that neither were conscious of the nature of that sentiment till after it had attained strength to cast a material influence on their after-lives. The familiarity of near relatives, associating constantly together, produced a warm sentiment of affection, cemented by similarity of

pursuits, and enlivened by diversity of character ; while the perfect tranquillity of their lives afforded no event that could withdraw the veil of ignorance from their eyes.

Could a woman of Lady Audley's discernment, it may be asked, place two young persons in such a situation, and doubt the consequences ? Those who are no longer young are liable to forget that love is a plant of early growth, and that the individuals that they have but a short time before beheld placing their supreme felicity on a rattle and a go-cart, can so soon be actuated by the strongest passions of the human breast.

Sir Edmund completed his nineteenth year, and Alicia entered her eighteenth, when this happy state of unconscious security was destroyed by a circumstance which rent the veil from her eyes, and disclosed his sentiments in all their energy and warmth. This circumstance was no other than a proposal of marriage to Alicia, from a gentleman of large fortune and brilliant connexions, who resided in their neighbourhood. His character was as little calculated as his appearance to engage the affections of a young woman of delicacy and good sense. But he was a man of consequence ; heir to an earldom ; member for the county : and Lady Audley, rejoicing at what she termed Alicia's good fortune, determined that she should become his wife.

With mild firmness she rejected the honour intended her ; but it was with difficulty that Lady Audley's mind could adopt or understand the idea of an opposition to her wishes. She could not seriously embrace the conviction, that Alicia was determined to disobey her ; and, in order to bring her to a right understanding, she underwent a system of persecution that tended naturally to increase the antipathy her suitor had inspired. Lady Audley, with the indiscriminating zeal of prejudiced and overbearing persons, strove to recommend

him to her niece by all those attributes which were of value in her own eyes ; making allowance for a certain degree of indecision in her niece, but never admitting a doubt that in due time her will should be obeyed, as it had always hitherto been.

At this juncture, Sir Edmund returned from a short excursion, and was struck by the altered looks and pensive manners of his once cheerful cousin. About a week after his arrival, he found Alicia one morning in tears, after a long conversation with Lady Audley. Sir Edmund tenderly soothed her, and entreated to be made acquainted with the cause of her distress. She was so habituated to impart every thought to her cousin, the intimacy and sympathy of their souls was so entire, that she would not have concealed the late occurrence from him, had she not been withheld by the natural timidity and delicacy a young woman feels in making her own conquests the subject of conversation. But now, so pathetically and irresistibly persuaded by Sir Edmund, and sensible that every distress of hers wounded his heart, Alicia candidly related to him the pursuit of her disagreeable suitor, and the importunities of Lady Audley in his favour. Every word she had spoken had more and more dispelled the mist that had so long hung over Sir Edmund's inclinations. At the first mention of a suitor, he had felt that to be hers was a happiness that comprised all others ; and that the idea of losing her made the whole of existence appear a frightful blank. These feelings were no sooner known to himself, than spontaneously poured into her delighted ears ; while she felt that every sentiment met a kindred one in her breast. Alicia sought not a moment to disguise those feelings which she now, for the first time, became aware of ; they were known to the object of her innocent affection as soon as to herself, and both were convinced, that, though not conscious before of the nature of their sentiments,

friendship had long been mistaken for love in their hearts.

But this state of blissful serenity did not last long. On the evening of the following day, Lady Audley sent for her to her dressing-room. On entering, Alicia was panic-struck at her aunt's pale countenance, fiery eyes, and frame convulsed with passion. With difficulty, Lady Audley, struggling for calmness, demanded an instant and decided reply to the proposals of Mr Compton, the gentleman who had solicited her hand. Alicia entreated her aunt to waive the subject, as she found it impossible ever to consent to such an union.

Scarcely was her answer uttered, when Lady Audley's anger burst forth uncontrollably, and Alicia gathered from it that her rage had its source in a declaration her son had made to her of his affection for his cousin, and his resolution of marrying her as soon as he was of age : which open avowal of his sentiments had followed Lady Audley's injunctions to him to forward the suit of Mr Compton.

That her son, for whom she had in view one of the first matches in the kingdom, should dare to choose for himself, and, above all, to choose one whom she considered as much his inferior in birth as she was in fortune, was a circumstance quite insupportable to her feelings.

Of the existence of love, Lady Audley had little conception ; and she attributed her son's conduct to wilful disobedience and obstinacy. In proportion as she had hitherto found him complying and gentle, her wrath had kindled at his present firmness and inflexibility. So bitter were her reflections on his conduct, so severe her animadversions on the being he loved, that Sir Edmund, fired with resentment, expressed his resolution of acting according to the dictates of his own will ; and expressed his contempt for her authority, in terms the most unequivocal. Lady Audley, ignorant of the arts

of persuasion, by every word she uttered more and more widened the breach her imperiousness had occasioned, until Sir Edmund, feeling himself no longer master of his temper, announced his intention of leaving the house, to allow his mother time to reconcile herself to the inevitable misfortune of beholding him the husband of Alicia Malcolm.

He instantly ordered his horses and departed, leaving the following letter for his cousin :—

“ I have been compelled, by motives of prudence, of which you are the sole object, to depart without seeing you. My absence became necessary from the unexpected conduct of Lady Audley, which has led me so near to forgetting that she was my mother, that I dared not remain, and subject myself to excesses of temper which I might afterwards repent. Two years must elapse before I can become legally my own master ; and, should Lady Audley so far depart from the dictates of cool judgment as still to oppose what she knows to be inevitable, I fear that we cannot meet till then. My heart is well known to you ; therefore I need not enlarge on the pain I feel at this unlooked-for separation. At the same time, I am cheered with the prospect of the unspeakable happiness that awaits me—the possession of your hand ; and the confidence I feel in your constancy is in proportion to the certainty I experience in my own : I cannot therefore fear that any of the means which may be put in practice to disunite us will have more effect on you than on me.

“ Looking forward to the moment that shall make you mine for ever, I remain, with steady confidence and unspeakable affection, your

“ EDMUND AUDLEY.”

With a trembling frame, Alicia handed the note to Lady Audley, and begged leave to retire for a short

time ; expressing her willingness to reply at another moment to any question her aunt might choose to put to her with regard to her engagement with Sir Edmund.

In the solitude of her own chamber, Alicia gave way to those feelings of wretchedness which she had with difficulty stifled in the presence of Lady Audley, and bitterly wept over the extinction of her bright and newly-formed visions of felicity. To yield to unmerited ill-usage, or to crouch beneath imperious and self-arrogated power, was not in the nature of Alicia ; and, had Lady Audley been a stranger to her, the path of duty would have been less intricate. However much her own pride might have been wounded by entering into a family which considered her as an intruding beggar, never would she have consented to sacrifice the virtuous inclinations of the man she loved to the will of an arrogant and imperious mother. But, alas ! the case was far different. The recent ill-treatment she had experienced from Lady Audley could not efface from her noble mind the recollection of benefits conferred from the earliest period of her life, and of unvarying attention to her welfare. To her aunt she owed all but existence : she had wholly supported her—had bestowed on her the most liberal education ; and from Lady Audley sprung every comfort and pleasure she had hitherto enjoyed.

Had she been brought up by her paternal relations, she would in all probability never have beheld her cousin ; and the mother and son might have lived in uninterrupted concord. Could she be the person to inflict on Lady Audley the severest disappointment she could experience ? The thought was too dreadful to bear ; and, knowing that procrastination could but increase her misery, no sooner had she felt convinced of the true nature of her duty, than she made a

steady resolution to perform and to adhere to it. Lady Audley had *vowed, that, while she had life, she would never give her consent to her son's marriage*; and Alicia was too well acquainted with her disposition to have the faintest expectation she would relent.

But to remain any longer under her protection was impossible; and she resolved to anticipate any proposal of that sort from her protectress.

When Lady Audley's passion had somewhat cooled, she again sent for Alicia. She began by repeating her *invincible enmity* to the marriage, in a manner the most impressive, and rendered still more decisive by the cool collectedness of her manner. She then desired to hear what Alicia had to say in exculpation of her conduct.

The profound sorrow which filled the heart of Alicia left no room for timidity or indecision. She answered without hesitation or embarrassment, and asserted her innocence of all deceit, in such a manner as to leave no doubt at least of honourable proceeding. In a few words she expressed her gratitude for the benefits her aunt had through life conferred upon her; and, while she openly professed to think herself, in the present instance, deeply wronged, she declared her determination of never uniting herself to her cousin without the consent of his mother.

She then proceeded to ask, where her aunt deemed it most advisable for her to reside in future.

Lady Audley, convinced that moderate measures would be most likely to insure a continuance of Alicia's obedience, expressed herself grieved at the necessity of parting with her, and pleased that she should have the good sense to perceive the propriety of such a separation.

Sir Duncan Malcolm, the grandfather of Alicia, had, in the few communications that had passed between Lady Audley and him, always expressed a wish to

see his granddaughter before he died. Her ladyship's antipathy to Scotland, however, was such, that she would have deemed it absolute contamination for her niece to have entered the country; and she had, therefore, always eluded the request.

It was now, of all plans, the most eligible; and she graciously offered to convey her niece as far as Edinburgh. The journey was immediately settled; and, before Alicia left her aunt's presence, the promise was exacted with unfeeling tenacity, and given with melancholy firmness, never to unite herself to Sir Edmund unsanctioned by his mother.

Alas! how imperfect is human wisdom! Even in seeking to do right, how many are the errors we commit! Alicia judged wrong in thus sacrificing the happiness of Sir Edmund to the pride and injustice of his mother;—but her error was that of a noble, self-denying spirit, entitled to respect, even though it cannot claim approbation. The honourable open conduct of her niece had so far gained upon Lady Audley, that she did not object to her writing to Sir Edmund, which she did as follows:—

“DEAR SIR EDMUND,

“A painful line of conduct is pointed out to me by duty; yet, of all the regrets I feel, not one is so poignant as the consciousness of that which you will feel at learning that I have for ever resigned the claims you so lately gave me to your heart and hand. It was not weakness—it could not be inconstancy—that produced the painful sacrifice of a distinction still more gratifying to my heart than flattering to my pride.

“Need I remind you, that to your mother I owe every benefit in life? nothing can release me from the tribute of gratitude, which would be ill repaid by braving her authority and despising her will. Should

I give her reason to regret the hour she received me under her roof, to repent of every benefit she has hitherto bestowed on me,—should I draw down a mother's displeasure, what reasonable hopes could we entertain of solid peace through life? I am not in a situation which entitles me to question the justice of Lady Audley's will; and that will has pronounced that I shall never be Sir Edmund's wife.

"Your first impulse may perhaps be, to accuse me of coldness and ingratitude, in quitting the place and country you inhabit, and resigning you back to yourself, without personally taking leave of you; but I trust that you will, on reflection, absolve me from the charge.

"Could I have had any grounds to suppose that a personal interview would be productive of comfort to you, I would have joyfully supported the sufferings it would have inflicted on myself. But, question your own heart as to the use you would have made of such a meeting; bear in mind, that Lady Audley has my solemn promise never to be yours without her consent—a promise not lightly given—then imagine what must have been an interview between us under such circumstances.

"In proof of an affection which I can have no reason to doubt, I conjure you to listen to the last request I shall ever make to my dear cousin. Give me the heart-felt satisfaction to know that my departure has put an end to those disagreements between mother and son of which I have been the innocent cause.

"Farewell, dear Edmund! May every happiness attend your future life!
A. M."

To say that no tears were shed during the composition of this letter, would be to overstrain fortitude beyond natural bounds. With difficulty Alicia checked the effusions of her pen: she wished to have said much

more, and to have soothed the agony of renunciation by painting with warmth her tenderness and her regret ; but reason urged, that, in exciting his feelings and displaying her own, she would defeat the chief purpose of her letter : she hastily closed and directed it, with a feeling almost akin to despair.

The necessary arrangements for the journey having been hastily made, the ladies set out two days after Sir Edmund had so hastily quitted them. The uncomplaining Alicia buried her woes in her own bosom ; and neither murmurs on the one hand, nor reproaches on the other, were heard.

At the end of four days, the travellers entered Scotland ; and, when they stopped for the night, Alicia, fatigued and dispirited, retired immediately to her apartment.

She had been there but a few minutes, when the chambermaid knocked at the door, and informed her that she was wanted below.

Supposing that Lady Audley had sent for her, she followed the girl without observing that she was conducted in an opposite direction ; when, upon entering an apartment, what was her astonishment at finding herself, not in the presence of Lady Audley, but in the arms of Sir Edmund ! In the utmost agitation, she sought to disengage herself from his almost frantic embrace ; while he poured forth a torrent of rapturous exclamations, and swore that no human power should ever divide them again.

"I have followed your steps, dearest Alicia, from the moment I received your letter. We are now in Scotland—in this blessed land of liberty. Every thing is arranged ; the clergyman is now in waiting ; and, in five minutes, you shall be my own beyond the power of fate to sever us."

Too much agitated to reply, Alicia wept in silence ;

and, in the delight of once more beholding him she had thought never more to behold, forgot, for a moment, the duty she had imposed upon herself. But the native energy of her character returned. She raised her head, and attempted to withdraw from the encircling arms of her cousin.

"Never until you have vowed to be mine! The clergyman—the carriage—every thing is in readiness"——

At this juncture, the door opened, and, pale with rage, her eyes flashing fire, Lady Audley stood before them. A dreadful scene now ensued. Sir Edmund disdained to enter into any justification of his conduct, or even to reply to the invectives of his mother, but lavished the most tender assiduities on Alicia; who, overcome more by the conflicts of her own heart than with alarm at Lady Audley's violence, sat the pale and silent image of consternation.

Baffled by her son's indignant disregard, Lady Audley turned all her fury on her niece; and, in the most opprobrious terms that rage could invent, upbraided her with deceit and treachery—accusing her of making her pretended submission instrumental to the more speedy accomplishment of her marriage. Too much incensed to reply, Sir Edmund seized his cousin's hand, and was leading her from the room.

"Go, then—go, marry her; but first hear me swear, solemnly swear!"—and she raised her hands and eyes to heaven—"that my malediction shall be your portion! Speak but the word, and no power shall make me withhold it!"

"Dear Edmund!" exclaimed Alicia, distractedly, "never ought I to have allowed time for the terrifying words that have fallen from Lady Audley's lips: never for me shall your mother's malediction fall on you. Farewell for ever!" and, with the strength of despera-

tion, she rushed past him, and quitted the room. Sir Edmund madly followed, but in vain. Alicia's feelings were too highly wrought at that moment to be touched even by the man she loved ; and, without an additional pang, she saw him throw himself into the carriage which he had destined for so different a purpose, and quit for ever the woman he adored.

It may easily be conceived of how painful a nature must have been the future intercourse betwixt Lady Audley and her niece. The former seemed to regard her victim with that haughty distance which the unrelenting oppressor never fails to entertain towards the object of his tyranny ; while even the gentle Alicia, on her part, shrank, with ill-concealed abhorrence, from the presence of that being whose stern decree had blasted all the fairest blossoms of her happiness.

Alicia was received with affection by her grandfather ; and she laboured to drive away the heavy despondency which pressed on her spirits, by studying his taste and humours, and striving to contribute to his comfort and amusement.

Sir Duncan had chosen the time of Alicia's arrival to transact some business ; and, instead of returning immediately to the Highlands, he determined to remain some weeks in Edinburgh for her amusement.

But, little attractive as dissipation had ever been, it was now absolutely repugnant to Alicia. She loathed the idea of mixing in scenes of amusement with a heart incapable of joy, a spirit indifferent to every object that surrounded her ; and in solitude alone she expected gradually to regain her peace of mind.

In the amusements of the gay season of Edinburgh, Alicia expected to find all the vanity, emptiness, and frivolity of London dissipation, without its varied brilliancy and elegant luxury ; yet, so much was it the habit of her mind to look to the fairest side of things,

and to extract some advantage from every situation in which she was placed, that, pensive and thoughtful as was her disposition, the discriminating only perceived her deep dejection, while all admired her benevolence of manner and unaffected desire to please.

By degrees, Alicia found that, in some points, she had been inaccurate in her idea of the style of living of those who form the best society of Edinburgh. The circle is so confined, that its members are almost universally known to each other; and those various gradations of gentility, from the cit's sang party to the duchess's most crowded assembly, all totally distinct and separate, which are to be met with in London, have no prototype in Edinburgh. There, the ranks and fortunes being more on an equality, no one is able greatly to exceed his neighbour in luxury and extravagance. Great magnificence, and the consequent gratification produced by the envy of others, being out of the question, the object for which a reunion of individuals was originally invented becomes less of a secondary consideration. Private parties for the actual purpose of society and conversation are frequent, and answer the destined end; and in the societies of professed amusement are to be met the learned, the studious, and the rational,—not presented as shows to the company by the host and hostess, but professedly seeking their own gratification.

Still the lack of beauty, fashion, and elegance disappoint the stranger accustomed to their brilliant combination in a London world. But Alicia had long since sickened in the metropolis at the frivolity of beauty, the heartlessness of fashion, and the insipidity of elegance; and it was a relief to her to turn to the variety of character she found beneath the cloak of simple, eccentric, and sometimes coarse manners.

We are never long so totally abstracted by our own

feelings, as to be unconscious of the attempts of others to please us.

Amongst the many who expressed good-will towards Alicia, there were a few whose kindness and real affection failed not to meet with a return from her; and others, whose rich and varied powers of mind, for the first time, afforded her a true specimen of the exalting enjoyment produced by a communion of intellect. She felt the powers of her understanding enlarge in proportion; and, with this mental activity, she sought to solace the languor of her heart, and save it from the listlessness of despair.

Alicia had been about six weeks in Edinburgh, when she received a letter from Lady Audley. No allusions were made to the past; she wrote upon general topics, in the cold manner that might be used to a common acquaintance; and slightly named her son as having set out upon a tour to the Continent.

Alicia's heart was heavy, as she read the heartless letter of the woman whose cruelty had not been able to eradicate wholly from her breast the strong durable affection of early habit.

Sir Duncan and Alicia spent two months in Edinburgh, at the end of which time they went to his country seat in ——shire. The adjacent country was picturesque; and Sir Duncan's residence, though bearing marks of the absence of taste and comfort in its arrangements, possessed much natural beauty.

Two years of tranquil seclusion had passed over her head, when her dormant feelings were all aroused by a letter from Sir Edmund. It informed her that he was now of age; that his affection remained unalterable; that he was newly arrived from abroad; and concluded by declaring his intention of presenting himself at once to Sir Duncan, and soliciting his permission to claim her hand.

Alicia read the letter with grateful affection and poignant regret. Again she shed the bitter tears of disappointment, at the hard task of refusing for a second time so noble and affectionate a heart. But conscience whispered, that to hold a passive line of conduct would be, in some measure, to deceive Lady Audley's expectations; and she felt, with exquisite anguish, that she had no means to put a final stop to Sir Edmund's pursuits, and to her own trials, but by bestowing her hand on another. The first dawning of this idea was accompanied by the most violent burst of anguish; but, far from driving away the painful subject, she strove to render it less appalling by dwelling upon it, and labouring to reconcile herself to what seemed her only plan of conduct. She acknowledged to herself, that, to remain still single, a prey to Sir Edmund's importunities, and the continual temptations of her own heart, was, for the sake of present indulgence, submitting to a fiery ordeal, from which she could not escape unblameable without the most repeated and agonising conflicts.

Three months still remained for her of peace and liberty, after which Sir Duncan would go to Edinburgh. There she would be sure of meeting with the loved companion of her youthful days; and the lurking weakness of her own breast would then be seconded by the passionate eloquence of the being she most loved and admired upon earth.

She wrote to him, repeating her former arguments; declaring that she could never feel herself absolved from the promise she had given Lady Audley, but by that lady herself, and imploring him to abandon a pursuit which would be productive only of lasting pain to both.

Her arguments, her representations, all failed in their effect on Sir Edmund's impetuous character. His answer was short and decided; the purport of it, that

he should see her in Edinburgh the moment she arrived there.

"My fate then is fixed," thought Alicia, as she read this letter; "I must finish the sacrifice."

The more severe had been the struggle between love and victorious duty, the more firmly was she determined to maintain this dear-bought victory.

Alicia's resolution of marrying was now decided, and the opportunity was not wanting. She had become acquainted, during the preceding winter, in Edinburgh, with Major Douglas, eldest son of Mr Douglas of Glenfern. He had then paid her the most marked attention; and, since her return to the country, had been a frequent visitor at Sir Duncan's. At length he avowed his partiality, which was heard by Sir Duncan with pleasure, by Alicia with dread and submission. Yet she felt less repugnance towards him than to any other of her suitors. He was pleasing in his person, quiet and simple in his manners, and his character stood high for integrity, good temper, and plain sense. The sequel requires little farther detail. Alicia Malcolm became the wife of Archibald Douglas.

An eternal constancy is a thing so rare to be met with, that persons who desire that sort of reputation strive to obtain it by nourishing the ideas that recall the passion, even though guilt and sorrow should go hand in hand with it. But Alicia, far from piquing herself in the love-lorn pensiveness she might have assumed had she yielded to the impulse of her feelings, diligently strove, not only to make up her mind to the lot which had devolved to her, but to bring it to such a frame of cheerfulness as should enable her to contribute to her husband's happiness.

When the soul is no longer buffeted by the storms of hope or fear, when all is fixed unchangeably for life, sorrow for the past will never long prey on a pious and

well regulated mind. If Alicia lost the buoyant spirit of youth, the bright and quick play of fancy, yet a placid contentment crowned her days ; and, at the end of two years, she would have been astonished had any one marked her as an object of compassion.

She scarcely ever heard from Lady Audley ; and, in the few letters her aunt had favoured her with, she gave favourable, though vague, accounts of her son. Alicia did not court a more unreserved communication, and had long since taught herself to hope that he was now happy. Soon after their marriage, Major Douglas quitted the army, upon succeeding to a small estate on the banks of Lochmarlie, by the death of an uncle ; and there, in the calm seclusion of domestic life, Mrs Douglas found that peace which might have been denied her amid gayer scenes.

Chapter x6.

And joyous was the scene in early summer.

Madoc.

ON Henry's return from his solitary ramble, Mrs Douglas learnt from him the cause of the misunderstanding that had taken place ; and judging that, in the present state of affairs, a temporary separation might be of use to both parties, as they were now about to return home, she proposed to her husband to invite his brother and Lady Juliana to follow and spend a few weeks with them at Lochmarlie Cottage.

The invitation was eagerly accepted ; for though Lady Juliana did not anticipate any positive pleasure from the change, still she thought that every place must be more agreeable than her present abode, especially as she stipulated for the utter exclusion of the aunts from the party.

To atone for this mortification, Miss Bella was invited to fill the vacant seat in the carriage ; and, accordingly, with a cargo of strong shoes, great-coats, and a large work-bag well stuffed with white-seam, she took her place at the appointed hour.

The day they had chosen for their expedition was one that "sent a summer feeling to the heart."

The air was soft and genial ; not a cloud stained the bright azure of the heavens ; and the sun shone out in all his splendour, shedding life and beauty even over the desolate heath-clad hills of Glenfern. But, after they had journeyed a few miles, suddenly emerging from the valley, a scene of matchless beauty burst at once upon the eye. Before them lay the dark-blue waters of Lochmarlie, reflecting, as in a mirror, every surrounding object, and bearing on its placid transparent bosom a fleet of herring-boats, the drapery of whose black suspended nets contrasted with picturesque effect the white sails of the larger vessels, which were vainly spread to catch a breeze. All around, rocks, meadows, woods, and hills mingled in wild and lovely irregularity.

On a projecting point of land stood a little fishing village ; its white cottages reflected in the glassy waters that almost surrounded it. On the opposite side of the lake, or rather estuary, embosomed in a wood, rose the lofty turrets of Lochmarlie Castle ; while here and there, perched on some mountain's brow, were to be seen the shepherd's lonely hut, and the heath-covered summer shealing.

Not a breath was stirring, not a sound was heard, save the rushing of a waterfall, the tinkling of some silver rivulet, or the calm rippling of the tranquil lake ; now and then, at intervals, the fisherman's Gaelic ditty, chanted, as he lay stretched on the sand in some sunny nook ; or the shrill distant sound of childish glee. How delicious to the feeling heart to behold so fair a scene of

unsophisticated nature, and to listen to her voice alone, breathing the accents of innocence and joy !

But none of the party who now gazed on it had minds capable of being touched with the emotions it was calculated to inspire.

Henry, indeed, was rapturous in his expressions of admiration ; but he concluded his panegyrics by wondering his brother did not keep a cutter, and resolving to pass a night on board one of the herring-boats, that he might eat the fish in perfection.

Lady Juliana thought it might be very pretty, if, instead of those frightful rocks and shabby cottages, there could be villas, and gardens, and lawns, and conservatories, and summer-houses, and statues.

Miss Bella observed, if it was hers, she would cut down the woods, and level the hills, and have races.

The road wound along the sides of the lake, sometimes overhung with banks of natural wood, which, though scarcely budding, grew so thick as to exclude the prospect ; in other places surmounted by large masses of rock, festooned with ivy, and embroidered by mosses of a thousand hues that glittered under the little mountain streamlets. Two miles further on stood the simple mansion of Mr Douglas. It was situated in a wild sequestered nook, formed by a little bay at the further end of the lake. On three sides it was surrounded by wooded hills, that offered a complete shelter from every nipping blast. To the south, the lawn, sprinkled with trees and shrubs, sloped gradually down to the water.

At the door, they were met by Mrs Douglas, who welcomed them with the most affectionate cordiality, and conducted them into the house through a little circular hall, filled with flowering shrubs and foreign plants.

" How delightful ! " exclaimed Lady Juliana, as she stopped to inhale the rich fragrance. " Cape jasmine,

and geraniums ! I do delight in them,"—twisting off the fairest blossoms of each in token of her affection : "and I quite dote upon heliotrope,"—gathering a handful of its flowers as she spoke. "What quantities I used to have from papa's conservatories !"

Mrs Douglas made no reply ; but conducted her to the drawing-room, where her chagrin was dispelled by the appearance of comfort and even elegance that it bore. "Now, this is really what I like," cried she, throwing herself on one of the couches ; "a large fire, open windows, quantities of roses, comfortable ottomans, and pictures ; only what a pity you haven't a larger mirror."

Mrs Douglas now rang for refreshments, and apologised for the absence of her husband, who, she said, was so much interested in his ploughing, that he seldom made his appearance till sent for.

Henry then proposed that they should all go out and surprise his brother ; and though walking in the country formed no part of Lady Juliana's amusements, yet, as Mrs Douglas assured her the walks were perfectly dry, and her husband was so pressing, she consented. The way lay through a shrubbery, by the side of a brawling brook, whose banks retained all the wildness of unadorned nature. Moss, and ivy, and fern clothed the ground ; and, under the banks, the young primroses and violets began to raise their heads ; while the red wintry berry still hung thick on the hollies.

"This is really very pleasant," said Henry, stopping to contemplate a view of the lake through the branches of a weeping birch ; "the sound of the stream, and the singing of the birds, and all those wild flowers, make it appear as if it was summer in this spot : and only look, Julia, how pretty that wherry looks lying at anchor." Then whispering to her, "What would you think of such a desert as this, with the man of your heart ?"

Lady Juliana made no reply, but by complaining of the heat of the sun, the hardness of the gravel, and the damp from the water.

Henry, who now began to look upon the condition of a Highland farmer with more complacency than formerly, was confirmed in his favourable sentiments at sight of his brother, following the primitive occupation of the plough, his fine face glowing with health, and lighted up with good humour and happiness. He hastily advanced towards the party, and, shaking his brother and sister-in-law most warmly by the hand, expressed, with all the warmth of a kind heart, the pleasure he had in receiving them at his house: then observing Lady Juliana's languid air, and imputing to fatigue of body what, in fact, was the consequence of mental vacuity, he proposed returning home by a shorter road than that by which they had come. Henry was again in raptures at the new beauties this walk presented, and at the high order and neatness in which the grounds were kept.

"This must be a very expensive place of yours, though," said he, addressing his sister-in-law; "there is so much garden and shrubbery, and such a number of rustic bridges, bowers, and so forth: it must require half a dozen men to keep it in any order."

"Such an establishment would very ill accord with our moderate means," replied she: "we do not pretend to one regular gardener; and had our little embellishments been productive of much expense, or tended solely to my gratification, I should never have suggested them. When we first took possession of this spot, it was a perfect wilderness, with a dirty farm-house on it: nothing but mud about the doors, nothing but wood and briers and brambles beyond it; and the village presented a still more melancholy scene of rank luxuriance, in its swarms of dirty idle girls and mischievous boys. I have generally found, that wherever an evil exists, the remedy is

not far off; and in this case it was strikingly obvious. It was only engaging these ill-directed children, by trifling rewards, to apply their lively energies in improving instead of destroying the works of nature, as had formerly been their zealous practice. In a short time, the change on the moral as well as the vegetable part of creation became very perceptible: the children grew industrious and peaceable; and, instead of destroying trees, robbing nests, and worrying cats, the bigger boys, under Douglas's direction, constructed those wooden bridges and seats, or cut out and gravelled the little winding paths that we had previously marked out. The task of keeping every thing in order is now easy, as you may believe when I tell you the whole of our pleasure-grounds, as you are pleased to term them, receive no other attention than what is bestowed by children under twelve years of age. And now having, I hope, acquitted myself of the charge of extravagance, I ought to beg Lady Juliana's pardon for this long, and, I fear, tiresome detail."

Having now reached the house, Mrs Douglas conducted her guest to the apartment prepared for her; while the brothers pursued their walk.

As long as novelty retained its power, and the comparison between Glenfern and Lochmarlie was fresh in remembrance, Lady Juliana, charmed with every thing, was in high good-humour. But as the horrors of the one were forgotten, and the comforts of the other became familiar, the demon of *ennui* again took possession of her vacant mind; and she relapsed into all her capricious humours and childish impertinences. The harpsichord, which, on her first arrival, she had pronounced to be excellent, was now declared quite shocking; so much out of tune, that there was no possibility of playing upon it. The small collection of well-chosen novels she soon exhausted, and then they became "the

stupidest books she had ever read ; " the smell of the heliotrope now gave her the head-ache ; the sight of the lake made her sea-sick.

Mrs Douglas heard all these civilities in silence ; and much more " in sorrow than in anger." In the wayward inclinations, variable temper, and wretched inanity of this poor victim of indulgence, she beheld the sad fruits of a fashionable education ; and thought, with humility, that, under similar circumstances, such might have been her own character.

" Oh, what an awful responsibility do those parents incur," she would mentally exclaim, " who thus neglect or corrupt the noble deposit of an immortal soul ! And who, alas ! can tell where the mischief may end ? This unfortunate will herself become a mother ; yet, wholly ignorant of the duties, incapable of the self-denial, of that sacred office, she will bring into the world creatures to whom she can only transmit her errors and her weaknesses ! "

These reflections at times deeply affected the generous heart and truly Christian spirit of Mrs Douglas ; and she sought, by every means in her power, to restrain those faults which she knew it would be vain to attempt eradicating.

To diversify the routine of days which grew more and more tedious to Lady Juliana, the weather being remarkably fine, many little excursions were made to the nearest country seats ; which, though they did not afford her any actual pleasure, answered the purpose of consuming a considerable portion of her time.

Several weeks passed away, during which little inclination was shown on the part of the guests to quit their present residence, when Mr and Mrs Douglas were summoned to attend the sick-bed of Sir Duncan Malcolm ; and though they pressed their guests to remain during their absence, yet Henry felt that it

would be highly offensive to his father were they to do so, and therefore resolved immediately to return to Glenferm.

Chapter xvj.

They steeked doors, they steeked yetts,
Close to the cheek and chin;
They steeked them a' but a little wicket,
And Lammikin crap in.

Now quhere's the lady of this castle?

* * * * *

Old Ballad.

THE party were received with the loudest acclamations of joy by the good old ladies; and even the laird seemed to have forgotten that his son refused to breed black cattle, and that his daughter-in-law was above the management of her household.

The usual salutations were scarcely over, when Miss Grizzy, flying to her little writing-box, pulled out a letter, and, with an air of importance, having enjoined silence, she read as follows:—

Lochmarlie Castle, March 27. 17—

“DEAR CHILD,

“Sir Sampson's stomach has been as bad as it could well be, but not so bad as your roads—he was shook to a jelly. My petticoat will never do. Mrs M^cHall has had a girl. I wonder what makes people have girls; they never come to good: boys may go to the mischief, and be good for something—if girls go, they're good for nothing I know of. I never saw such roads—I suppose Glenferm means to bury you all in the highway—there are holes enough to make you graves,

and stones big enough for coffins. Colonel G—— is dead—he was near a hundred ; she is ninety ; so their loves have not been nipt in the bud. She is a Portuguese—he married her in India for her money. She was jealous, and fancied every woman in love wid de colonel. Pretty Miss Macdonald staid two days with them. When she was going away, Mrs G—— said to her, ‘You will come again when I do ask you ; and dat,’ stamping her foot, ‘will be—never!’ Poor thing! I went to visit her last week. She cried like a baby—she was in weeds, and wore the colonel’s long *queue* fastened to her widow’s cap, and hanging down her back—a fact which can be attested by living witnesses : it was his own hair. She said she had sent for de minister to make her de Protestant, dat she might go to de same place wid de dear good colonel. She is an oddity ;—beware of becoming oddities, dear girls, and hanging *queues* to your widow’s caps—if ever you have any. I like you all very much, and you must all come and spend Tuesday here—not all, but some of you—you, dear child, and your brother, and a sister, and your pretty niece, and handsome nephew—I love handsome people. Miss M’Kraken has bounced away with her father’s footman—I hope he will clean his knives on her. Come early, and come dressed, to your loving friend,

“ ISABELLA MACLAUGHLAN.”

The letter ended, a volley of applause ensued, which at length gave place to consultation. “Of course we all go—at least as many as the carriage will hold : we have no engagements, and there can be no objections.”

Lady Juliana had already frowned a contemptuous refusal, but in due time it was changed to a sullen assent, at the pressing entreaties of her husband, to whom any place was now preferable to home. In truth, the men-

tion of a party had more weight with her than either her husband's wishes or her aunt's remonstrances; and they had assured her, that she should meet with a large assemblage of the very first company at Lochmarlie Castle.

The day appointed for the important visit arrived; and it was arranged that two of the elder ladies, and one of the young ones, should accompany Lady Juliana in her barouche, which Henry was to drive.

At peep of dawn the ladies were astir, and at eight o'clock breakfast was hurried over, that they might begin the preparations necessary for appearing with dignity at the shrine of this their patron saint. At eleven they reappeared in all the majesty of sweeping silk trains and well-powdered toupees. In outward show, Miss Bella was not less elaborate. The united strength and skill of her three aunts and four sisters had evidently been exerted in forcing her hair into every position but that for which nature had intended it; curls stood on end around her forehead, and tresses were dragged up from the roots and formed into a club on the crown: her arms had been strapped back till her elbows met; and her respiration seemed suspended by means of a pink riband of no ordinary strength or doubtful hue—what wine-merchants call a "full body."

Three hours were passed in all the anguish of full-dressed impatience, an anguish in which every female breast must be ready to sympathise. But Lady Juliana sympathised in no one's distresses but her own; and the difference of waiting in high dress or in *déshabille* was a distinction to her inconceivable. But those to whom *to be dressed* is an event, will readily enter into the feelings of the ladies in question, as they sat, walked, wondered, exclaimed, opened windows, wrung their hands, adjusted their dress, &c. &c., during the three

tedious hours they were doomed to wait the appearance of their niece.

Two o'clock came, and with it Lady Juliana, as if purposely to testify her contempt, in a plain morning dress and mob cap. The sisters looked blank with disappointment; for, having made themselves mistresses of the contents of her ladyship's wardrobe, they had settled amongst themselves that the most suitable dress for the occasion would be black velvet, and accordingly many hints had been given the preceding evening on the virtues of black velvet gowns: they were warm, and not too warm; they were dressy, and not too dressy; Lady Maclaughlan was a great admirer of black velvet gowns; she had one herself with long sleeves, and that buttoned behind; black velvet gowns were very much wore; they knew several ladies who had them; and they were certain there would be nothing else wore amongst the matrons at Lady Maclaughlan's, &c. &c.

Time was, however, too precious to be given either to remonstrance or lamentation. Miss Jacky could only give an angry look, and Miss Grizzy a sorrowful one, as they hurried away to the carriage, uttering exclamations of despair at the lateness of the hour, and the impossibility that any body could have time to dress after getting to Lochmarlie Castle.

The consequence of the delay was, that it was almost dark by the time they reached the place of destination. The carriage drove up to the grand entrance; but neither lights nor servants greeted their arrival; and no answer was returned to the ringing of the bell.

"This is most alarming, I declare!" cried Miss Grizzy.

"It is quite incomprehensible!" observed Miss Jacky. "We had best get out, and try the back door."

The party alighted, and another attack being made upon the rear, it met with better success; for a little

boy now presented himself at a narrow opening of the door, and, in a strong Highland accent, demanded "wha ta war seekin'?"

"Lady Maclaughlan, to be sure, Colin," was the reply.

"Weel, weel," still refusing admittance; "but ta leddie's no to be spoken wi' to-night."

"Not to be spoken with!" exclaimed Miss Grizzy, almost sinking to the ground with apprehension. "Good gracious!—I hope!—I declare!—Sir Sampson!"——

"Oo ay, hur may see Lochmarlie hursel." Then opening the door, he led the way to a small sitting-room, and ushered them into the presence of Sir Sampson, who was reclining in an easy chair, arrayed in a *robe-de-chambre* and night-cap. The opening of the door seemed to have broken his slumber; for, gazing around with a look of stupefaction, he demanded, in a sleepy peevish tone, "who was there?"

"Bless me, Sir Sampson!" exclaimed both spinsters at once, darting forward and seizing a hand; "bless me, don't you know us!—and here is our niece, Lady Juliana."

"My Lady Juliana Douglas!" cried he, with a shriek of horror, sinking again upon his cushions—"I am betrayed—I—Where is my Lady Maclaughlan?—where is Murdoch?—where is—distraction!—this is not to be borne! My Lady Juliana Douglas, the Earl of Courtland's daughter, to be introduced to Lochmarlie Castle in so vile a manner, and myself surprised in so indecorous a situation!" And, his lips quivering with passion, he rang the bell.

The summons was answered by the same attendant that had acted as gentleman usher.

"Where are all my people?" demanded his incensed master.

"Hurs aw awa tull ta Sandy Mor's."

"Where is my lady?"

"Hurs i' ta teach-tap." *

"Where is Murdoch?"

"Hurs helpin' ta leddie i' ta teach-tap."

"Oh, we'll all go up-stairs, and see what Lady Maclaughlan and Murdoch are about in the laboratory," said Miss Grizzy. "So, pray just go on with your nap, Sir Sampson; we shall find the way—don't stir:" and, taking Lady Juliana by the hand, away tripped the spinsters in search of their friend. "I cannot conceive the meaning of all this," whispered Miss Grizzy to her sister as they went along. "Something must be wrong; but I said nothing to dear Sir Sampson, his nerves are so easily agitated. But what can be the meaning of all this? I declare it's quite a mystery!"

After ascending several long dark stairs, and following divers windings and turnings, the party at length reached the door of the *sanctum sanctorum*; and having gently tapped, the voice of the priestess was heard, in no very encouraging accents, demanding "who was there?"

"It's only us," replied her trembling friend.

"Only us! humph! I wonder what fool is called '*only us*!' Open the door, Philistine, and see what '*only us*' wants."

The door was opened, and the party entered. The day was closing in, but, by the faint twilight that mingled with the gleams from a smoky smouldering fire, Lady Maclaughlan was dimly discernible, as she stood upon the hearth, watching the contents of an enormous kettle, that emitted both steam and odour. She turned round on the entrance of the party, and regarded the invaders with her usual marble aspect, but without moving either joint or muscle as they drew near.

"I declare—I don't think you know us, Lady

* House-top.

Maclaughlan," said Miss Grizzy, in a tone of affected vivacity, with which she strove to conceal her agitation.

"Know you!" repeated her friend—"humph! Who you are, I know very well; but what brings you here, I do *not* know. Do you know yourselves?"

"I declare—I can't conceive—" began Miss Grizzy; but her trepidation arrested her speech, and her sister therefore proceeded—

"Your ladyship's declaration is no less astonishing than incomprehensible. We have waited upon you by your own express invitation on the day appointed by yourself; and we have been received in a manner, I must say, we did not expect, considering this is the first visit of our niece, Lady Juliana Douglas."

"I'll tell you what, girls," replied their friend, as she still stood with her back to the fire, and her hands behind her; "I'll tell you what, you are not yourselves—you are all lost—quite mad—that's all—humph!"

"If that's the case, we cannot be fit company for your ladyship," retorted Miss Jacky, warmly; "and therefore the best thing we can do is to return the way we came: come, Lady Juliana—come, sister."

"I declare, Jacky, the impetuosity of your temper is—I really cannot stand it"—and the gentle Grizzy gave way to a flood of tears.

"You used to be rational, intelligent creatures," resumed her ladyship; "but what has come over you I don't know. You come tumbling in here in the middle of the night—and at the top of the house—nobody knows how—when I never was thinking of you; and because I don't tell a parcel of lies, and pretend I expected you, you are for flying off again—humph! Is this the behaviour of women in their senses? But, since you are here, you may as well sit down, and say what brought you. Get down, Gil Blas—go along, Tom Jones!" addressing two huge cats, who occupied

a three-cornered leather chair by the fire-side, and who relinquished it with much reluctance.

"How do you do, pretty creature?" kissing Lady Juliana, as she seated her in this cat's cradle. "Now, girls, sit down, and tell what brought you here to-night—humph!"

"Can your ladyship ask such a question, after having formally invited us?" demanded the wrathful Jacky.

"I'll tell you what, girls; you were just as much invited by me to dine here to-day, as you were appointed to sup with the Grand Signior—humph!"

"What day of the week does your ladyship call this?" demanded Jacky, with assumed composure.

"I call it Tuesday; but I suppose the Glenfern calendar calls it Thursday: Thursday was the day I invited you to come."

"I'm sure—I'm thankful we've got to the bottom of it at last," cried Miss Grizzy; "I read it, because I am sure I thought you wrote it, Tuesday."

"How could you be such a fool, my love, as to read it any such thing? Even if it had been written Tuesday, you might have had the sense to know it meant Thursday. When did you know me invite anybody for a Tuesday?"

"I declare it's very true;—I certainly ought to have known better. I am quite confounded at my own stupidity; for, as you observe, even though you had said Tuesday, I might have known that you must have meant Thursday—there can be no doubt about that!"

"Well, well, no more about it: since you are here, you must stay here, and you must have something to eat, I suppose. Sir Sampson and I have dined two hours ago; but you shall have your dinner for all that. I must shut shop for this day, it seems, and leave my resuscitating tincture all in the dead-thraw—Methusalem pills quite in their infancy. But there's no help for it: since

you are here, you must stay here, and you must be fed and lodged : so get along, girls, get along. Here, Gil Blas—come, Tom Jones.” And, preceded by her cats, and followed by her guests, she led the way to the parlour.

Chapter xliij.

Point de milieu : l’hymen et ses liens
Sont les plus grands ou des maux ou des biens.
L’Enfant Prodigue.

ON returning to the parlour, they found Sir Sampson had, by means of the indefatigable Murdoch, been transported into a suit of regimentals, and well-powdered peruke, which had in some measure restored him to his usual complacency. Henry, who had gone in quest of some person to take charge of the horses, now entered ; and shortly after a tray of provisions was brought, which the half-famished party eagerly attacked, regardless of their hostess’s admonitions to eat sparingly, as nothing was so dangerous as eating heartily when people were hungry.

The repast being at length concluded, Lady Mac-laughlan led her guests into the saloon. They passed through an antechamber, which seemed, by the faint light of the lamp, to contain nothing but piles upon piles of old china, and entered the room of state.

The eye at first wandered in uncertain obscurity ; and the guests cautiously proceeded over a bare oaken floor, whose dark polished surface seemed to emulate a mirror, through an apartment of formidable extent. The walls were hung with rich, but grotesque, tapestry. The ceiling, by its height and massy carving, bespoke the age of the apartment ; but the beauty of the design was lost in the gloom.

A Turkey carpet was placed in the middle of the floor; and on the middle of the carpet stood the card-table, at which two footmen, hastily summoned from the revels at Sandy Mor's, were placing chairs and cards; seemingly eager to display themselves, as if to prove that they were always at their posts.

Cards were a matter of course with Sir Sampson and his lady; but, as whist was the only game they ever played, a difficulty arose as to the means of providing amusement for the younger part of the company.

"The library is locked, but I have plenty of books here for you, my loves," said Lady Maclaughlan; and, taking one of the candles, she made a journey to the other end of the room, and entered a small turret, from which her voice was heard issuing most audibly, "All the books that should ever have been published are here. Read these, and you need read no more: all the world's in these books—humph! Here's the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' twenty-six volumes,—'History of Scotland,' four volumes. Here's 'Floyer's Medicina Geronomica, or the Galenic Art of preserving Old Men's Health;' 'Love's Art of Surveying and Measuring Land;' 'Transactions of the Highland Society;' 'Glass's Cookery;' 'Fencing Familiarised;' 'Observations on the Use of Bath Waters;' 'Cure for Soul Sores;' 'De Blondt's Military Memoirs;' 'Mac Ghie's Book-keeping;' 'Mead on Pestilence;' 'Astentology, or the Art of preserving Feeble Life!'"

As she enumerated the contents of her library, she paused at the end of each title, in hopes of hearing the book called for; but she was allowed to proceed without interruption to the end of her catalogue.

"Why! what would you have, children?" cried she, in one of her sternest accents. "I don't know! Do you know yourselves? Here are two novels, the only ones I know of worth reading."

Henry gladly accepted the first volumes of "Gil Blas" and "Don Quixote;" and, giving the latter to Lady Juliana, began the other himself. Miss Bella was settled with her hands across; and, the whist party being arranged, a solemn silence ensued.

Lady Juliana turned over a few pages of her own book, then begged Henry would exchange with her; but both were in so different a style from the French and German school she had been accustomed to, that they were soon relinquished in disappointment and disgust.

On the table, which had been placed by the fire for her accommodation, lay an English newspaper, and to that she had recourse as a last effort at amusement. But, alas! even the dulness of Don Quixote was delight, compared to the anguish with which this fatal paper was fraught, in the shape of the following paragraph, which presented itself to the unfortunate fair one's eye:—

"Yesterday was married, by special licence, at the house of Mrs —, his Grace the Duke of L—, to the beautiful and accomplished Miss D—. His Royal Highness the Duke of — was gracious enough to act as father to the bride upon this occasion, and was present in person, as were their Royal Highnesses the Dukes of — and of —. The bride looked most bewitchingly lovely, in a simple robe of the finest Mechlin lace, with a superb veil of the same costly material, which hung down to her feet. She wore a set of pearls, estimated at thirty thousand pounds, whose chaste elegance corresponded with the rest of the dress. Immediately after the ceremony they partook of a sumptuous collation, and the happy pair set off in a chariot and four, attended by six outriders and two coaches and four.

"After spending the honeymoon at his grace's unique

villa on the Thames, their graces will receive company at their splendid mansion in Portman Square. The wedding paraphernalia is said to have cost ten thousand pounds, and her grace's jewel-box is estimated at little less than half a million."

Wretched as Lady Juliana had long felt herself to be, her former state of mind was positive happiness compared to what she now endured. Envy, regret, self-reproach, and resentment, all struggled in the breast of the self-devoted beauty, while the paper dropped from her hand, and she cast a fearful glance around, as if to ascertain the reality of her fate. The dreadful certainty smote her with a sense of wretchedness too acute to be suppressed; and, darting a look of horror at her unconscious husband, she threw herself back in her chair, while the scalding tears of envy, anger, and repentance fell from her eyes.

Accustomed as Henry now was to these ebullitions of *feeling* from his beauteous partner, he was not yet so indifferent as to behold them unmoved, and he sought to soothe her by the kindest expressions and most tender epithets. These, indeed, had long since ceased to charm away the lady's ill-humour, but they sometimes succeeded in mollifying it. But now, their only effect seemed to be increasing the irritation, as she turned from all her husband's inquiries, and impatiently withdrew her hands from his.

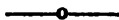
Astonished at a conduct so incomprehensible, Douglas earnestly besought an explanation.

"There!" cried she at length, pushing the paper towards him; "see there what I might have been but for you; and then compare it with what you have made me!"

Confounded by this reproach, Henry eagerly snatched up the paper, and his eye instantly fell on the fatal paragraph; the poisoned dart that struck the death-blow to

all that now remained to him of happiness—the fond idea that, even amidst childish folly and capricious estrangement, still, in the main, he was beloved ! With a quivering lip, and cheek blanched with mortification and indignant contempt, he laid down the paper ; and, without casting a look upon, or uttering a word to, his once *adored and adoring Juliana*, quitted the apartment in all that bitterness of spirit which a generous nature must feel when it first discovers the fallacy of a cherished affection. Henry had, indeed, ceased to regard his wife with the ardour of romantic passion ; nor had the solid feelings of affectionate esteem supplied its place : but he loved her still, because he believed himself the engrossing object of her tenderness ; and, in that blest delusion, he had hitherto found palliatives for her folly, and consolation for all his own distresses.

To indifference he might for a time have remained insensible ; because, though his feelings were strong, his perceptions were not acute. But the veil of illusion was now rudely withdrawn. He beheld himself detested where he imagined himself adored ; and the anguish of disappointed affection was heightened by the stings of wounded pride and deluded self-love.



Chapter xviii.

What's done, cannot be undone ; to bed, to bed, to bed !

Exit Lady Macbeth.

THE distance at which the whist party had placed themselves, and the deep interest in which their senses were involved, while the fate of the odd trick was pending, had rendered them insensible to the scene that was acting at the other extremity of the apartment. The task of administering succour to the

afflicted fair one therefore devolved upon Miss Bella, whose sympathetic powers never had been called into action before. Slowly approaching the wretched Lady Juliana as she lay back in her chair, the tears coursing each other down her cheeks, she tendered her a smelling-bottle, to which her own nose and the noses of her sisters were wont to be applied whenever, as they choicely expressed it, they wanted a "fine smell." But, upon this trying occasion, she went still further; she unscrewed the stopper, unfolded a cotton handkerchief, upon which she poured a few drops of lavender-water, and offered it to her ladyship, deeming that the most elegant and efficient manner in which she could afford relief. But the well-meant offering was silently waved off; and poor Miss Bella, having done all that the light of reason suggested to her, retreated to her seat, wondering what it was her fine sister-in-law would be at.

By the time the rubber was ended, her ladyship's fears of Lady Maclaughlan had enabled her to conquer her feelings so far, that they had now sunk into a state of sullen dejection, which the good aunts eagerly interpreted into the fatigue of the journey; Miss Grizzy declaring, that although the drive was most delightful—nobody could deny that—and they all enjoyed it excessively, as indeed everybody must who had eyes in their head,—yet she must own, at the same time, that she really felt as if all her bones were broke.

A general rising therefore took place at an early hour; and Lady Juliana, attended by all the ladies of the party, was ushered into the chamber of state, which was fitted up in a style acknowledged to be truly magnificent, by all who had ever enjoyed the honour of being permitted to gaze on its white velvet bed-curtains, surmounted by the family arms, and gracefully tucked up by hands *sinister-couped* at the wrists, &c.

But, lest my fashionable readers should be of a different opinion, I shall refrain from giving an inventory of the various articles with which this favoured chamber was furnished. Misses Grizzy and Jacky occupied the green-room which had been fitted up at Sir Sampson's birth; the curtains hung at a respectful distance from the ground; the chimney-piece was far beyond the reach even of the majestic Jacky's arm; and the painted tiffany toilette was covered with a shoal of little tortoise-shell boxes of all shapes and sizes. A grim visage, scowling from under a Highland bonnet, graced by a single black feather, hung on high. Miss Grizzy placed herself before it, and, holding up the candle, contemplated it for about the nine hundredth time, with an awe bordering almost on adoration.

"Certainly, Sir Eneas must have been a most wonderful man—nobody can deny that; and there can be no question but he had the second sight to the greatest degree—indeed, I never heard it disputed; many of his prophecies, indeed, seem to have been quite incomprehensible; but that is so much the more extraordinary, you know—for instance, the one with regard to our family," lowering her voice—"for my part I declare I never could comprehend it; and yet there must be something in it, too; but how any branch from the Glenfern tree—of course, you know, that can only mean the family tree—should help to prop Lochmarlie's walls, is what I can't conceive. If Sir Sampson had a son, to be sure, some of the girls—for you know it can't be any of us; at least I declare for my own part—I'm sure even of any thing—which I trust, in goodness, there is not the least chance of, should ever happen to dear Lady Maclaughlan,—which, of course, is a thing not to be thought about—and indeed I'm quite convinced it would be very much out of respect to dear Lady Maclaughlan, as well as friend-

ship for us, if such a thing was ever to come into his head—there can be no doubt about that.”

Here the tender Grizzly got so involved in her own ideas, as to the possibility of Lady Maclaughlan's death, and the propriety of Sir Sampson's proposals, together with the fulfilling of Sir Eneas the seer's prophecy, that there is no saying how far she strayed in her self-created labyrinth. Such as choose to follow her may. For our part, we prefer accompanying the youthful Bella to her chamber, whither she was also attended by the lady of the mansion. Bella's destiny for the night lay at the top of one of those little straggling wooden stairs common in old houses, which creaked in all directions. The bed was placed in a recess dark as Erebus, and betwixt the bed and the wall was a depth profound, which Becky's eye dared not attempt to penetrate.

“You will find every thing right here, child,” said Lady Maclaughlan; “and if any thing should be wrong, you must think it right. I never suffer any thing to be thought wrong here—humph!” Bella, emboldened by despair, cast a look towards the recess; and, in a faint voice, ventured to inquire, “Is there no fear that Tom Jones or Gil Blas may be in that place behind the bed?”

“And if they should,” answered her hostess, in her most appalling tone, “what is that to you? Are you a mouse, that you are afraid they will eat you? Yes, I suppose you are. You are perhaps the princess in the fairy tale, who was a woman by day, and a mouse by night. I believe you are bewitched! So I wish your mouse-ship a good night.” And she descended the creaking stair, singing,—

“Mrs Mouse, are you within?—

Yes, indeed, I sit and spin,” &c.

till even her stentorian voice was lost in distance. Poor Bella's heart died with the retreating sounds, and only

revived to beat time with the worm in the wood. Long and eerie was the night, as she gave herself up to all the horrors of a superstitious mind: ghosts, grey, black, and white, flitted around her couch—cats, half human, held her throat—the death-watch ticked in her ears. At length, the light of morning shed its brightening influence on the dim opaque of her understanding; and when all things stood disclosed in light, she shut her eyes, and ope'd her mouth, in all the blissfulness of security.

The light of day was indeed favourable for displaying to advantage the beauties of Lochmarlie Castle, which owed more to nature than art. It was beautifully situated on a smooth green bank, which rose somewhat abruptly from the lake, and commanded a view which, if not extensive, was yet full of variety and grandeur.

Its venerable turrets reared themselves above the trees, which seemed coeval with them; and the vast magnificence of its wide-spreading lawns and extensive forests seemed to appertain to some feudal prince's lofty domain. But in vain were creation's charms spread before Lady Juliana's eyes. Woods, and mountains, and lakes, and rivers, were odious things; and her heart panted for dusty squares and suffocating drawing-rooms.

Something was said of departing, by the sisters, when the party met at breakfast; but this was immediately negatived in the most decided manner by their hostess.

"Since you have taken your own time to come, my dears, you must take mine to go. Thursday was the day I invited you for, or at least wanted you for, so you must stay Thursday, and if you will you may go away on Friday, and my blessing go with you—humph!"

The sisters, charmed with what they termed the hospitality and friendship of this invitation, delightedly agreed to remain; and as things were at least conducted in better style there than at Glenfern, uncomfortable as it was, Lady Juliana found herself somewhat nearer home

there than at the family château. Lady MacLaughlan, who *could* be commonly civil in her own house, was at some pains to amuse her guests, by showing her collection of china and cabinet of gems, both of which were remarkably fine. There was also a library, a music room, a gallery containing some good pictures, and, what Lady Juliana prized still more, a billiard-table. Thursday, the destined day, at length arrived, and a large party assembled to dinner. Lady Juliana, as she half reclined on a sofa, surveyed the company with a supercilious stare, and without deigning to take any part in the general conversation that went on. It was enough that they spoke with a peculiar accent—everything they said must be barbarous; but she was pleased once more to eat off plate, and to find herself in rooms which, though grotesque and comfortless, yet wore an air of state, and whose vastness enabled her to keep aloof from those with whom she never willingly came in contact. It was therefore with regret she saw the day of her departure arrive, and found herself once more an unwilling inmate of her only asylum, particularly as her situation now required comforts and indulgences which it was there impossible to procure.

Chapter xix.

— No mother's care
Shielded my infant Innocence with prayer :
* * * * *
Mother, miscall'd, farewell !

SAVAGE.

THE happy period, so long and anxiously anticipated by the ladies of Glenfern, at length arrived, and Lady Juliana presented to the house of Douglas—not, alas ! the ardently desired heir

to its ancient consequence, but twin-daughters, who could only be regarded as additional burdens on its poverty.

The old gentleman's disappointment was excessive ; and, as he paced up and down the parlour, with his hands in his pockets, he muttered, "Twa lasses ! I ne'er heard tell the like o't ! I wonder whar their tochers are to come frae ?"

Miss Grizzy, in great perturbation, declared it certainly was a great pity it had so happened, but these things couldn't be helped : she was sure Lady Mac-laughlan would be greatly surprised,—there could be no doubt about that.

Miss Jacky saw no cause for regret, and promised herself an endless source of delight in forming the minds and training the ideas of her infant nieces.

Miss Nicky wondered how they were to be nursed. She was afraid Lady Juliana would not be able for both, and wet-nurses had such appetites !

Henry, meanwhile, whose love had all revived in anxiety for the safety, and anguish for the sufferings, of his youthful partner, had hastened to her apartment, and, kneeling by her side, he pressed her hands to his lips with feelings of deepest emotion.

"Dearer—a thousand times dearer to me than ever," whispered he, as he fondly embraced her, "and those sweet pledges of our love !"

"Ah, don't mention them," interrupted his lady, in a languid tone. "How very provoking ! I hate girls so—and two of them—oh !" and she sighed deeply. Her husband sighed too ; but from a different cause. The nurse now appeared, and approached with her helpless charges ; and both parents, for the first time, looked on their own offspring.

"What nice little creatures !" said the delighted father, as, taking them in his arms, he imprinted the

first kiss on the innocent faces of his daughters, and then held them to their mother; who, turning from them with disgust, exclaimed, "How can you kiss them, Harry! They are so ugly, and they squall so! Oh do, for heaven's sake, take them away! And see, there is poor Psyche, quite wretched at being so long away from me—pray, put her on the bed."

"She will grow fond of her babies by and by," said poor Henry to himself, as he quitted the apartment, with feelings very different from those with which he entered it.

At the pressing solicitations of her husband, the fashionable mother was prevailed upon to attempt nursing one of her poor starving infants; but the first trial proved also the last, as she declared nothing upon earth should ever induce her to perform so odious an office; and as Henry's entreaties, and her aunt's remonstrances, served alike to irritate and agitate her, the contest was, by the advice of her medical attendant, completely given up. A wet-nurse was therefore procured; but as she refused to undertake both children, and the old gentleman would not hear of having two such incumbrances in his family, it was settled, to the unspeakable delight of the maiden sisters, that the youngest should be entrusted entirely to their management, and brought up by hand.

The consequence was such as might have been foreseen. The child, who was naturally weak and delicate at its birth, daily lost a portion of its little strength, while its continued cries declared the intensity of its sufferings, though they produced no other effect on its unfeeling mother than her having it removed to a more distant apartment, as she could not endure to hear the cross little thing scream so for nothing. On the other hand, the more favoured twin, who was from its birth a remarkably strong lively infant, and met with all justice

from its nurse, throve apace, and was pronounced by her to be the very picture of the bonnie leddie, its mamma ; and then, with all the low cunning of her kind, she would launch forth into panegyrics of its beauty, and prophecies of the great dignities and honours that would one day be showered upon it ; until, by her fawning and flattery, she succeeded in exciting a degree of interest which nature had not secured for it in the mother's breast.

Things were in this situation, when, at the end of three weeks, Mr and Mrs Douglas arrived to offer their congratulations on the birth of the twins. Lady Juliana received her sister-in-law in her apartment, which she had not yet quitted, and replied to her congratulations only by querulous complaints and childish murmurs.

"I am sure you are very happy in not having children," continued she, as the cries of the little sufferer reached her ear ; "I hope to goodness I shall never have any more.—I wonder if any body ever had twin daughters before ! and I, too, who hate girls so !"

Mrs Douglas, disgusted with her unfeeling folly, knew not what to reply, and a pause ensued ; but a fresh burst of cries from the unfortunate baby again called forth its mother's indignation.

"I wish to goodness that child was gagged," cried she, holding her hands to her ears. "It has done nothing but scream since the hour it was born, and it makes me quite sick to hear it."

"Poor little dear !" said Mrs Douglas, compassionately, "it appears to suffer a great deal."

"Suffer !" repeated her sister-in-law : "what can it suffer ? I am sure it meets with a great deal more attention than any person in the house. These three old women do nothing but feed it from morning to night, with every thing they can think of, and make such a fuss about it !"

"I suspect, my dear sister, you would be very sorry for yourself," said Mrs Douglas, with a smile, "were you to endure the same treatment as your poor baby; stuffed with improper food, and loathsome drugs, and bandied about from one person to another."

"You may say what you please," retorted Lady Juliana, pettishly; "but I know it's nothing but ill-temper: nurse says so, too; and it is so ugly with constantly crying, that I cannot bear to look at it:" and she turned away her head as Miss Jacky entered with the little culprit in her arms, which she was vainly endeavouring to *talk* into silence, while she dandled it in the most awkward spinster-like manner imaginable.

"Shocking! what a fright!" exclaimed the tender parent, as her child was held up to her. "Why, it is much less than when it was born, and its skin is as yellow as saffron, and it squints! Only look what a difference!" as the nurse advanced and ostentatiously displayed her charge, who had just waked out of a long sleep; its cheeks flushed with heat; its skin completely filled up; and its large eyes rolling under its already dark eyelashes.

"My missy is just her mamma's pickter," drawled out the nurse, "but the wee missy's unco like her aunties."

"Take her away," cried Lady Juliana, in a tone of despair — "I wish I could send her out of my hearing altogether, for her noise will be my death."

"Alas! what would I give to hear the blessed sound of a living child!" exclaimed Mrs Douglas, taking the infant in her arms. "And how great would be my happiness, could I call this poor rejected one mine!"

"I'm sure you are welcome to my share of the little plague," said her sister-in-law, with a laugh, "if you can prevail upon Harry to give up his."

"I would give up a great deal, could my poor child

find a mother," replied her husband, who just then entered.

"My dear brother!" cried Mrs Douglas, her eyes beaming with delight, "do you then confirm Lady Juliana's kind promise? Indeed I will be a mother to your dear baby, and love her as if she were my own; and in a month—oh! in much less time—you shall see her as stout as her sister."

Henry sighed as he thought, "why has not my poor babe such a mother of its own!" Then thanking his sister-in-law for her generous intentions, he reminded her that she must consult her husband, as few men like to be troubled with any children but their own.

"You are in the right," said Mrs Douglas, blushing at the impetuosity of feeling which had made her forget for an instant the deference due to her husband; "I shall instantly ask his permission; and he is so indulgent to all my wishes, that I have little doubt of obtaining his consent:" and, with the child in her arms, she hastened to her husband, and made known her request.

Mr Douglas received the proposal with considerable coolness; wondering what his wife could see in such an ugly squalling thing, to plague herself about it. If it had been a boy, old enough to speak and run about, there might be some amusement in it; but he could not see the use of a squalling sickly infant—and a girl, too!

His wife sighed deeply, and the tears stole down her cheeks, as she looked on the wan visage and closed eyes of the little sufferer. "Poor baby!" said she, mournfully, "you are rejected on all hands, but your misery will soon be at an end;" and she was slowly leaving the room with her helpless charge, when her husband, touched at the sight of her distress, though the feeling that caused it he did not comprehend, called to her,—
"I am sure, Alicia, if you really wish to take charge of

the infant, I have no objections ; only I think you will find it a great plague, and the mother is such a fool ! ”

“ Worse than a fool,” said Mrs Douglas indignantly, “ for she hates and abjures this her poor unoffending babe.”

“ Does she so ? ” cried Mr Douglas, every kindling feeling roused within him at the idea of his blood being hated and abjured ; “ then, hang me ! if she shall have any child of Harry’s to hate, as long as I have a house to shelter it, and a sixpence to bestow upon it,”—taking the infant in his arms, and kindly kissing it.

Mrs Douglas smiled through her tears, as she embraced her husband, and praised his goodness and generosity ; then, full of exultation and delight, she flew to impart the success of her mission to the parents of her *protégé*.

Great was the surprise of the maiden-nurses at finding they were to be bereft of their little charge.

“ I declare, I think the child is doing as well as possible,” said Miss Grizzy. “ To be sure, it does yammer constantly—that can’t be denied ; and it is uncommonly small—nobody can dispute that. At the same time, I am sure, I can’t tell what makes it cry, for I’ve given it two colic powders every day, and a teaspoonful of Lady MacLaughlan’s carminative every three hours.”

“ And I’ve done nothing but make water-gruel and chop rusks for it,” quoth Miss Nicky, “ and yet it is never satisfied. I wonder what it would be at ! ”

“ I know perfectly well what it would be at,” said Miss Jacky, with an air of importance. “ All this crying and screaming is for nothing else but a nurse ; but it ought not to be indulged : there is no end of indulging the desires, and ’tis amazing how cunning children are, and how soon they know how to take advantage of people’s weakness,” glancing an eye of fire at Mrs

Douglas. "Were that my child, I would feed her on bread and water, before I would humour her fancies. A pretty lesson indeed, if she's to have her own way before she's a month old!"

Mrs Douglas knew that it was in vain to attempt arguing with her aunts. She therefore allowed them to wonder, and declaim over their sucking pots, colic powders, and other instruments of torture, while she sent to the wife of one of her tenants who had lately lain in, and who wished for the situation of nurse, appointing her to be at Lochmarlie the following day. Having made her arrangements, and collected the scanty portion of clothing Mrs Nurse chose to allow, Mrs Douglas repaired to her sister-in-law's apartment, with her little charge in her arms. She found her still in bed, and surrounded with her favourites.

"So you really are going to torment yourself with that little screech-owl," said she. "Well, I must say it's very good of you; but I am afraid you will soon tire of her. Children are such plagues! Are they not, my darling?" added she, kissing her pug.

"You will not say so when you have seen my little girl a month hence," said Mrs Douglas, trying to conceal her disgust for Henry's sake, who had just then entered the room. "She has promised me never to cry any more; so give her a kiss, and let us be gone."

The high-bred mother slightly touched the cheek of her sleeping babe, extended her finger to her sister-in-law, and, carelessly bidding them good-bye, returned to her pillow and her pugs.

Henry accompanied Mrs Douglas to the carriage, and, before they parted, he promised his brother to ride over to Lochmarlie in a few days. He said nothing of his child, but his glistening eye and the warm pressure of his hand spoke volumes to the kind heart of his brother; who assured him that Alice would be very

good to his little girl, and that he was sure she would get quite well when she got a nurse. The carriage drove off, and Henry, with a heavy spirit, returned to the house to listen to his father's lectures, his aunts' ejaculations, and his wife's murmurs.



Chapter xx.

We may boldly spend upon the hope of what
is to come in.

Henry IV.

THE birth of twin daughters awakened the young father to a still stronger sense of the total dependence and extreme helplessness of his condition. Yet how to remedy it he knew not: to accept of his father's proposal was out of the question, and it was equally impossible for him, were he ever so inclined, to remain much longer a burden on the narrow income of the Laird of Glenfern. One alternative only remained, which was to address the friend and patron of his youth, General Cameron; and to him he therefore wrote, describing all the misery of his situation, and imploring his forgiveness and assistance. "The old general's passion must have cooled by this time," thought he to himself, as he sealed the letter; "and, as he has often overlooked former scrapes, I think, after all, he will help me out of this greatest one of all."

For once, Henry was not mistaken. He received an answer to his letter, in which the general—after reviling his folly in marrying a lady of quality, upbraiding him for the birth of his twin daughters, and giving him some wholesome counsel as to his future mode of life—concluded by informing him that he had got him reinstated in his former rank in the army; that

he should settle seven hundred per annum on him, till he saw how matters were conducted; and, in the meantime, enclosed a draught for four hundred pounds, to open the campaign.

Though this was not, according to Henry's notions, "coming down handsomely," still it was better than not coming down at all; and, with a mixture of delight and disappointment, he flew to communicate the tidings to Lady Juliana.

"Seven hundred pounds a-year!" exclaimed she, in raptures: "what a quantity of money! why, we shall be quite rich, and I shall have such a beautiful house, and such pretty carriages, and give such parties, and buy so many fine things—oh dear, how happy I shall be!"

"You know little of money, Julia, if you think seven hundred pounds will do all that," replied her husband gravely. "I hardly think we can afford a house in town; but we may have a pretty cottage at Richmond or Twickenham; and I can keep a curicle, and drive you about, you know; and we may give famous good family dinners."

A dispute here ensued: her ladyship hated cottages, and curricles, and good family dinners, as much as her husband despised fancy balls, opera boxes, and chariots.

The fact was, that the one knew very nearly as much of the real value of money as the other, and Henry's *sober* scheme was just about as practicable as his wife's extravagant one.

Brought up in the luxurious profusion of a great house,—accustomed to issue her orders, and have them obeyed, Lady Juliana, at the time she married, was in the most blissful state of ignorance respecting the value of pounds, shillings, and pence. Her maid took care to have her wardrobe supplied with all things needful; and when she wanted a new dress, or a fashionable

jewel, it was only driving to Madame D.'s or Mr Y.'s, and desiring the article to be sent to herself, while the bill went to her papa.

From never seeing money in its own vulgar form, Lady Juliana had learned to consider it as a mere nominal thing; while, on the other hand, her husband, from seeing too much of it, had formed almost equally erroneous ideas of its powers. By the mistaken kindness of General Cameron, he had been indulged in all the fashionable follies of the day, and allowed to use his patron's ample fortune as if it had already been his own; nor was it until he found himself a prisoner at Glenfern from want of money, that he had ever attached the smallest importance to it. In short, both the husband and wife had been accustomed to look upon it in the same light as the air they breathed. They knew it essential to life, and concluded that it would come some way or other; either from the east or west, north or south. As for the vulgar concerns of meat and drink, servants' wages, taxes, and so forth, they never found a place in the calculations of either. Birth-day dresses, fêtes, operas, equipages, and state liveries, whirled in rapid succession through Lady Juliana's brain; while clubs, curricles, horses, and claret took possession of her husband's mind.

However much they differed in the proposed modes of showing off in London, both agreed perfectly in the necessity of going there; and Henry therefore hastened to inform his father of the change in his circumstances, and apprise him of his intention of immediately joining his regiment, the ——— Guards.

"Seven hunder pound a-year!" exclaimed the old gentleman; "seven hunder pound! Oo what can ye mak o' a' that miller? Ye'll surely lay by the half o't to tocher your bairns? Seven hunder pound a-year for doing naething!"

Miss Jacky was afraid, unless they got some person of sense (which would not be an easy matter) to take the management of it, it would perhaps be found little enough in the long run.

Miss Grizzy declared it was a very handsome income,—nobody could dispute that ; at the same time every body must allow that the money could not have been better bestowed, and she was certain—there could be no doubt about that—with the young people's good sense, and good principles, and two daughters to provide for, they would make a good use of it.

Miss Nicky observed, "there was a great deal of good eating and drinking in seven hundred a-year, if people knew how to manage it."

All was bustle and preparation throughout Glenfern Castle ; and the young ladies' good-natured activity and muscular powers were again in requisition to collect the wardrobe, and pack the trunks, imperial, &c., of their noble sister.

Glenfern remarked, "that fules war fond o' flitting, for they seemed glad to leave the good quarters they were in."

Miss Grizzy declared, there was a great excuse for their being glad, poor things ! young people were always so fond of a change : at the same time, it would have been quite natural for them to feel sorry too,—nobody could deny that !

Miss Jacky was astonished how any person's mind could be so callous as to think of leaving Glenfern without emotion.

Miss Nicky wondered what was to become of the christening cake she had ordered from Perth ; it might be as old as the hills before there would be another child born amongst them.

The misses were ready to weep at the disappointment of the dreaming-bread.

In the midst of all this agitation, mental and bodily, the long-looked for moment arrived. The carriage drove round ready packed and loaded ; and, absolutely screaming with delight, Lady Juliana sprang into it : as she nodded, and kissed her hand to the assembled group, she impatiently called to Henry to follow. His adieus were, however, not quite so tonish as those of his high-bred lady, for he went duly and severally through all the evolutions of kissing, embracing, shaking of hands, and promises to write ; then taking his station by the side of the nurse and child, the rest of the carriage being completely filled by the favourites, he bade a long farewell to his paternal halls and the land of his birth.

Chapter xxj.

—— For trifles, why should I displease
The man I love ? For trifles such as these,
To serious mischiefs lead the man I love ?

HORACE.

BRIGHT prospects of future happiness, and endless plans of expense, floated through Lady Juliana's brain, and kept her temper in some degree of serenity during the journey.

Arrived in London, she expressed herself enraptured at being once more in a civilised country, and restored to the society of human creatures. An elegant house and suitable establishment were immediately provided ; and a thousand dear friends, who had completely forgotten her existence, were now eager to welcome her to her former haunts, and lead her thoughtless and willing steps in the paths of dissipation and extravagance.

Soon after their arrival, they were visited by General

Cameron. It was two o'clock, yet Lady Juliana had not appeared ; and Henry, half-stretched upon a sofa, was dawdling over his breakfast, with half-a-dozen newspapers scattered round.

The first salutations over, the General demanded—
“Am I not to be favoured with a sight of your lady ? Is she afraid that I am one of your country relations, and taken her flight from the breakfast-table in consequence ?”

“She has not yet made her appearance,” replied Douglas ; “but I will let her know you are here. I am sure she will be happy to make acquaintance with one to whom I am so much indebted.”

A message was despatched to Lady Juliana, who returned for answer that she would be down immediately. Three quarters of an hour, however, elapsed ; and the general, provoked with this inattention and affectation, was preparing to depart, when the lady made her appearance.

“Juliana, my love,” said her husband, “let me present you to General Cameron—the generous friend who has acted the part of a father towards me, and to whom you owe all the comforts you enjoy.”

Lady Juliana slightly bowed with careless ease, and half uttered a “How d’ye do ?—very happy indeed—” as she glided on to pull the bell for breakfast. “Cupid, Cupid !” cried she to the dog, who had flown upon the general, and was barking most vehemently ; “poor darling Cupid ! are you almost starved to death ? Harry, do give him that muffin on your plate.”

“You are very late to-day, my love,” cried the mortified husband.

“I have been pestered for the last hour with Duval and the court dresses, and I could not fix on what I should like.”

“I think you might have deferred the ceremony of

choosing to another opportunity. General Cameron has been here above an hour."

"Dear! I hope you did not wait for me—I shall be quite shocked!" drawled out her ladyship, in a tone denoting how very indifferent the answer would be to her.

"I beg your ladyship would be under no uneasiness on that account," replied the general, in an ironical tone, which, though lost upon her, was obvious enough to Henry.

"Have you breakfasted?" asked Lady Juliana, exerting herself to be polite.

"Absurd, my love!" cried her husband. "Do you suppose I should have allowed the general to wait for that, too, all this time, if he had not breakfasted many hours ago?"

"How cross you are this morning, my Harry! I protest my Cupidon is quite ashamed of your *grossièreté*!"

A servant now entered to say Mr Shagg was come to know her ladyship's final decision about the hammer-cloths; and the new footman was come to be engaged; and the china merchant was below.

"Send up one of them at a time; and as to the footman, you may say I'll have him at once," said Lady Juliana.

"I thought you had engaged Mrs D.'s footman last week. She gave him the best character, did she not?" asked her husband.

"Oh, yes, his character was good enough; but he was a horrid cheat, for all that. He called himself five feet nine, and when he was measured he turned out to be only five feet seven and a half."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Henry, angrily. "What did that signify, if the man had a good character?"

"How absurdly you talk, Harry, as if a man's

character signified, who has nothing to do but stand behind my carriage! A pretty figure he would have made there beside Thomas, who is at least five feet ten!"

The entrance of Mr Shagg, bowing and scraping, and laden with cloths, lace, and fringes, interrupted the conversation.

"Well, Mr Shagg," cried Lady Juliana, "what's to be done with that odious leopard's skin? You must positively take it off my hands. I would rather never go in a carriage again than show myself in the Park with that frightful thing!"

"Certainly, my lady," replied the obsequious Mr Shagg, "anything your ladyship pleases; your ladyship can have any hammer-cloth you like; and I have accordingly brought patterns of the very newest fashions for your ladyship to make choice. Here are some uncommon elegant articles. At the same time, my lady, your ladyship must be sensible that it is impossible that we can take back the leopard's skin. It was not only cut out to fit your ladyship's coach-box—and consequently your ladyship understands it would not fit any other—but the silver feet and crests have also been affixed quite ready for use, so that the article is quite lost to us. I am confident, therefore, that your ladyship will consider of this, and allow it to be put down in your bill."

"Put it anywhere but on my coach-box, and don't bore me!" answered Lady Juliana, tossing over the patterns, and humming a tune.

"What!" said her husband, "is that the leopard's skin you were raving about last week, and are you tired of it before it has been used?"

"And no wonder. Who do you think I saw in the Park yesterday, but that old quiz Lady Denham, just come from the country, with her frightful old coach set

off with a hammer-cloth precisely like the one I had ordered. Only fancy people saying, Lady Denham sets the fashion for Lady Juliana Douglas! Oh, there's confusion and despair in the thought!"

Confusion, at least, if not despair, was painted in Henry's face, as he saw the general's glance directed alternately with contempt at Lady Juliana and at himself, mingled with pity. He continued to fidget about in all directions while Lady Juliana talked nonsense to Mr Shagg, and wondered if the general never meant to go away. But he calmly kept his ground till the man was dismissed, and another introduced, loaded with china jars, monsters, and distorted tea-pots, for the capricious fair one's choice and approbation.

"Beg ten thousand pardons, my lady, for not calling yesterday, according to appointment—quite an unforeseen impediment. The Countess of Godolphin had somehow got private intelligence that I had a set of fresh commodities just cleared from the Custom-house; and, well knowing that such things are not long in hand, her la'ship came up from the country on purpose—the countess has so much taste!—she drove straight to my warehouse, and kept me a close prisoner till after your la'ship's hour; but I hope it may not be taken amiss, seeing that it is not a customary thing with us to be calling on customers, not to mention that this line of goods is not easily transported about. However, I flatter myself the articles now brought for your ladyship's inspection will not be found beneath your notice. Please to observe this choice piece—it represents a Chinese cripple, squat on the ground, with his legs crossed. Your ladyship may observe the head and chin advanced forwards, as in the act of begging. The tea pours from the open mouth; and, till your ladyship tries, you can have no idea of the elegant effect it produces."

"That is really droll," cried Lady Juliana, with a laugh of delight; "and I must have the dear sick beggar, he is so deliciously hideous."

"And here," continued Mr Brittle, "is an amazing delicate article, in the way of a jewel: a frog of Turkish agate for burning pastiles in, my lady; just such as they use in the seraglio; and, indeed, this one I may call invaluable, for it was the favourite toy of one of the widowed sultanas, till she grew devout and gave up perfumes. One of her slaves disposed of it to my foreign partner. Here it opens at the tail, where you put in the pastiles, and, closing it up, the vapour issues beautifully through the nostrils, eyes, ears, and mouth, all at once. Here, sir," turning to Douglas, "if you are curious in new workmanship, I would have you examine this. I defy any jeweller in London to come up to the fineness of these hinges, and delicacy of the carving"——

"Pahaw, hang it!" said Douglas, turning away, and addressing some remark to the general, who was provokingly attentive to everything that went on.

"Here," continued Mr Brittle, "are a set of jars, tea-pots, mandarins, sea-monsters, and pug-dogs; all of superior beauty, but such as your ladyship may have seen before."

"Oh, the dear, dear little puggies! I must have them to amuse my own darlings. I protest here is one the image of Psyche; positively I must kiss it!"

"Oh dear! I am sure," cried Mr Brittle, simpering, and making a conceited bow, "your ladyship does it and me too much honour. But here, as I was going to say, is the phoenix of all porcelain ware—the *ne plus ultra* of perfection—what I have kept in my back-room, concealed from all eyes, until your ladyship shall pronounce upon it. Somehow one of my shopmen got word of it, and told her grace of L—— (who has a

pretty taste in these things for a young lady) that I had some particular choice article that I was keeping for a lady that was a favourite of mine. Her grace was in the shop the matter of a full hour and a half, trying to wheedle me out of a sight of this rare piece; and I pretending not to know what her grace would be after, but showing her thing after thing, to put it out of her head. But she was not so easily bubbled, and at last went away ill enough pleased. Now, my lady, prepare all your eyes:” he then went to the door, and returned, carrying with difficulty a large basket, which till then had been kept by one of his own satellites. After removing coverings of all descriptions, an uncouth group of monstrous size was displayed; which, on investigation, appeared to be a serpent coiled in regular folds round the body of a tiger placed on end; and the whole structure, which was intended for a vessel of some kind, was formed of the celebrated green mottled china, invaluable to connoisseurs.

“View that well,” exclaimed Mr Brittle, in a transport of enthusiasm, “for such a specimen not one of half the size has ever been imported to Europe. There is a long story about this my phoenix, as I call it; but to be brief, it was secretly procured from one of the temples, where, gigantic as it may seem, and uncouth for the purpose, it was the idol’s principal tea-pot!”

“O delicious!” cried Lady Juliana, clasping her hands in ecstasy; “I will give a party for the sole purpose of drinking tea out of this machine; and I will have the whole room fitted up like an Indian temple. Oh! it will be so new! I die to send out my cards. The Duchess of B—— told me the other day, with such a triumphant air, when I was looking at her two little green jars, not a quarter the size of this, that there was not a bit more of that china to be had for love or

money. Oh, she will be so provoked!" And she absolutely skipped for joy.

A loud rap at the door now announcing a visitor, Lady Juliana ran to the balcony, crying, "Oh, it must be Lady Gerard, for she promised to call early in the morning, that we might go together to a wonderful sale in some far-off place in the city—at Wapping, for aught I know. Mr Brittle, Mr Brittle, for the love of heaven, carry the dragon into the back drawing-room—I purchase it, remember!—make haste!—Lady Gerard is not to get a glimpse of it for the world."

The servant now entered with a message from Lady Gerard, who would not alight, begging that Lady Juliana would make haste down to her, as they had not a moment to lose. She was flying away without further ceremony than a "Pray, excuse me," to the general, when her husband called after her to know whether the child was gone out, as he wished to show her to the general.

"I don't know, indeed," replied the fashionable mother; "I haven't had time to see her to-day;" and, before Douglas could reply, she was down stairs.

A pause ensued—the general whistled a quick step, and Douglas walked up and down the room, in a pitiable state of mind, guessing pretty much what was passing in the mind of his friend, and fully sensible that it must be of a severer nature than any thing he could yet allow himself to think of his Juliana.

"Douglas," said the general, "have you made any step towards a reconciliation with your father-in-law? I believe it will become shortly necessary for your support."

"Juliana wrote twice after her marriage," replied he; "but the reception which her letters met with was not such as to encourage perseverance on our part. With regard to myself, it is not an affair in which delicacy

will permit me to be very active, as I might be accused of mercenary motives, which I am far from having."

"Oh, of that I acquit you; but surely it ought to be a matter of moment, even to a——Lady Juliana. The case is now altered. Time must have accustomed him to the idea of this imaginary affront; and, on my honour, if he thought like a gentleman and a man of sense, I know where he would think the misfortune lay. Nay, don't interrupt me. The old earl must now, I say, have cooled in his resentment; perhaps, too, his grandchildren may soften his heart; this must have occurred to you. Has her ladyship taken any further steps since her arrival in town?"

"I—I believe she has not; but I will put her in mind."

"A daughter who requires to have her memory refreshed on such a subject, is likely to make a valuable wife!" said the general, drily.

Douglas felt as if it was incumbent on him to be angry, but remained silent.

"Hark ye, Douglas," continued the general; "I speak this for your interest. You cannot go on without the earl's help. You know I am not on ceremony with you; and if I refrain from saying what you see I think about your present ruinous mode of life, it is not to spare your feelings, but from a sense of the uselessness of any such remonstrance. What I do give you is with good-will; but all my fortune would not suffice to furnish pug-dogs and deformed tea-pots for such a vitiated taste; and if it would, hang me if it should! But enough on this head. The earl has been in bad health, and is lately come to town. His son too, and his lady, are to come about the same time, and are to reside with him during the season. I have heard Lord Lindore spoken of as a good-natured easy man, and he would probably enter willingly into any scheme to reinstate his

sister into his father's good graces. Think of this, and make what you can of it; and my particular advice to you personally is, try to exchange into a marching regiment: for a fellow like you, with such a wife, London is the very mischief! and so good morning to you." He snatched up his hat, and was off in a moment.

Chapter xxi.

To reckon up a thousand of her pranks,
Her pride, her wasteful spending, her unkindness,
Her scolding, pouting, ...
Were to reap an endless catalogue.

Old Play.

WHEN Lady Juliana returned from her expedition it was so late that Douglas had not time to speak to her; and, separate engagements carrying them different ways, he had no opportunity to do so until the following morning at breakfast. He then resolved no longer to defer what he had to say, and began by reproaching her with the cavalier manner in which she had behaved to his good friend the general.

"Upon my life, Harry, you are grown perfectly savage," cried his lady. "I was most particularly civil. I wonder what you would have me to do? You know very well, I cannot have any thing to say to old men of that sort."

"I think," returned Henry, "you might have been gratified by making an acquaintance with my benefactor, and the man to whom you owe the enjoyment of your favourite pleasures. At any rate, you need not have made yourself ridiculous. May I perish, if I did not wish myself under ground while you were talking nonsense to those sneaking rascals, who wheedle you out of

your money! 'Sdeath! I had a good mind to throw them and their trumpery out of the window, when I saw you make such a fool of yourself."

"A fool of myself! how foolishly you talk! And as for that vulgar awkward general, he ought to have been too much flattered. Some of the monsters were so like himself, I am sure he must have thought I took them for the love of his round bare pate."

"Upon my soul, Julia, I am ashamed of you! Do leave off this excessive folly, and try to be rational. What I particularly wished to say to you is, that your father is in town, and it will be proper that you should make another effort to be reconciled to him."

"I dare say it will," answered Lady Juliana, with a yawn.

"And you must lose no time. When will you write?"

"There's no use in writing, or indeed doing any thing in the matter. I am sure he won't forgive me."

"And why not?"

"Oh, why should he do it now? He did not forgive me when I asked him before."

"And do you think, then, for a father's forgiveness it is not worth while to have a little perseverance?"

"I am sure he won't do it; so 'tis in vain to try;" repeated she, going to the glass, and singing, "*Papa non dite di no*," &c.

"By heavens, Julia!" cried her husband passionately, "you are past all endurance! Can nothing touch you?—nothing fix your thoughts, and make you serious for a single moment? Can I not make you understand that you are ruining yourself and me; that we have nothing to depend upon but the bounty of that man whom you disgust by your caprice, extravagance, and impertinence; and that if you don't get reconciled to your father, what is to become of you? You already

know what you have to expect from my family, and how you like living with them."

"Heavens, Harry! what is all this tirade about? Is it because I said papa wouldn't forgive me? I'm sure I don't mind writing to him; I have no objection, the first leisure moment I have; but really, in town, one's time is so engrossed"——

At this moment her maid entered in triumph, carrying on her arms a satin dress, embroidered with gold and flowers.

"See, my lady," cried she, "your new robe, as madame has sent home half a day sooner than her word; and she has disoblged several of the quality, by not giving the pattern."

"Oh, lovely! charming! Spread it out, Gage; hold it to the light: all my own fancy! Only look, Harry; how exquisite! how divine!"

Harry had no time to express his contempt for embroidered robes; for just then one of his knowing friends came, by appointment, to accompany him to Tattersal's, where he was to bid for a famous pair of curricie greys.

Days passed on without Lady Juliana's ever thinking it worth while to follow her husband's advice about applying to her father; until, a week after, Douglas overheard the following conversation between his wife and one of her acquaintance.

"You are going to this grand fête, of course," said Mrs G. "I'm told it is to eclipse every thing that has been yet seen or heard of."

"Of what fête do you speak?" demanded Lady Juliana.

"My dear creature, how Gothic you are! Don't you know any thing about this grand affair, that every body has been talking of for two days? Lady Lindore gives, at your father's house, an entertainment, which is

to be a concert, ball, and masquerade at once. All London is asked, of any distinction, *ça s'entend*. But, bless me, I beg pardon ! I totally forgot that you were not on the best terms possible in that quarter—but never mind, we must have you go ; there is not a person of fashion that will stay away : I must get you asked ; I shall petition Lady Lindore in your favour.”

“Oh, pray don't trouble yourself,” cried Lady Juliana, in extreme pique. “I believe I can get this done without your obliging interference ; but I don't know whether I shall be in town then.”

From this moment, Lady Juliana resolved to make a vigorous effort to regain a footing in her father's house. Her first action the next morning was to write to her brother, who had hitherto kept aloof, because he could not be at the trouble of having a difference with the earl, entreating him to use his influence in promoting a reconciliation between her father and herself.

No answer was returned for four days, at the end of which time Lady Juliana received the following note from her brother :—

“DEAR JULIA,

“I quite agree with you in thinking that you have been kept long enough in the corner, and shall certainly tell papa that you are ready to become a good girl whenever he shall please to take you out of it. I shall endeavour to see Douglas and you soon.

“Yours affectionately,

“LINDORE.

“Lady Lindore desires me to say you can have tickets for her ball, if you choose to come *en masque*.”

Lady Juliana was delighted with this billet, which she protested was every thing that was kind and

generous ; but the postscript was the part on which she dwelt with the greatest delight, as she repeatedly declared it was a great deal more than she expected. "You see, Harry," said she, as she tossed the note to him, "I was in the right. Papa won't forgive me ; but Lindore says he will send me a ticket for the fête : it is vastly attentive of him, for I did not ask it. But I must go disguised, which is monstrous provoking, for I'm afraid nobody will know me."

A dispute here ensued. Henry swore she should not steal into her father's house as long as she was his wife. The lady insisted that she should go to her brother's fête when she was invited ; and the altercation ended as altercations commonly do, leaving both parties more wedded to their own opinion than at first.

In the evening, Lady Juliana went to a large party ; and, as she was passing from one room to another, she was startled by a little paper pellet thrown at her. Turning round to look for the offender, she saw her brother standing at a little distance, smiling at her surprise. This was the first time she had seen him for two years, and she went up to him with an extended hand, while he gave her a familiar nod, and a "How d'ye do, Julia ?" and one finger of his hand, while he turned round to speak to one of his companions. Nothing could be more characteristic of both parties than this fraternal meeting ; and from this time they were the best friends imaginable.

Chapter xxiii.

Helas ! où donc chercher ou trouver le bonheur,
Nulle part tout entier, partout avec mesure !

VOLTAIRE.

SOME days before the expected fête, Lady Juliana, at the instigation of her adviser, Lady Gerard, resolved upon taking the field against the Duchess of L——. Her grace had issued cards for a concert ; and, after mature deliberation, it was decided that her rival should strike out something new, and announce a christening for the same night.

The first intimation Douglas had of the honour intended him by this arrangement was through the medium of the newspaper ; for the husband and wife were now much too fashionable to be at all *au fait* of each other's schemes. His first emotion was to be extremely surprised ; the next to be exceedingly displeased ; and the last to be highly gratified at the *eclat* with which his child was to be made a Christian. True, he had intended requesting the general to act as godfather upon the occasion ; but Lady Juliana protested she would rather the child never should be christened at all (which already seemed nearly to have been the case) than have that cross vulgar-looking man to stand sponsor. Her ladyship, however, so far conceded, that the general was to have the honour of giving his name to the next, if a boy, for she was now near her second confinement ; and, with this promise, Henry was satisfied to slight the only being in the world to whom he looked for support to himself and his children. In the utmost delight, the fond mother drove away to consult her confidants upon the name and decorations of the child, whom she had not even looked at for many days.

Every thing succeeded to admiration. Amid crowds

of spectators, in all the pomp of lace and satin, surrounded by princes and peers, and handed from duchesses to countesses, the twin daughter of Henry Douglas, and the heroine of future story, was baptized by the names of Adelaide Julia Geraldine.

Some months previous to this event, Lady Juliana had received a letter from Mrs Douglas, informing her of the rapid improvement that had taken place in her little charge, and requesting to know by what name she should have her christened; at the same time gently insinuating her wish that, in compliance with the custom of the country, and as a compliment due to the family, it should be named after its paternal grandmother.

Lady Juliana glanced over the first line of the letter, then looked at the signature, resolved to read the rest as soon as she should have time to answer it; and, in the mean time, tossed it into a drawer, amongst old visiting cards and unpaid bills.

After vainly waiting for an answer much beyond the accustomed time when children are baptized, Mrs Douglas could no longer refuse to accede to the desires of the venerable inmates of Glenfern; and, about a month before her favoured sister received her more elegant appellations, the neglected twin was baptized by the name of Mary.

Mrs Douglas's letter had been enclosed in the following one from Miss Grizzy; and as it had not the good fortune to be perused by the person to whom it was addressed, we deem it but justice to the writer to insert it here :—

“Glenfern Castle, July 30, 17—.

“MY DEAREST NIECE, LADY JULIANA,

“I am Certain, as indeed we all are, that it will Afford your Ladyship and our dear Nephew the greatest

Pleasure to see this letter Franked by our Worthy and Respectable Friend Sir Sampson Maclaughlan, Bart., especially as it is the First he has ever franked ; out of compliment to you, as I assure you he admires you excessively, as indeed we all do. At the same Time, you will of course, I am sure, Sympathise with us all in the distress Occasioned by the melancholy Death of our late Most Obliging Member, Duncan M'Dunsmuir, Esquire, of Dhunacrag and Auchnagoil, who you never have had the pleasure of seeing. What renders his death particularly distressing, is, that Lady Maclaughlan is of opinion it was entirely owing to eating Raw oysters, and damp feet. This ought to be a warning to all Young people to take care of Wet feet, and Especially eating Raw oysters, which are certainly Highly dangerous, particularly where there is any Tendency to Gout. I hope, my dear Niece, you have got a pair of Stout walking shoes, and that both Henry and you remember to Change your feet after Walking. I am told Raw Oysters are much the fashion in London at present ; but when this Fatal Event comes to be Known, it will of course Alarm people very much, and put them upon their guard both as to Damp Feet, and Raw oysters. Lady Maclaughlan is in High spirits at Sir Sampson's Success, though, at the Same Time, I assure you, she Felt much for the Distress of poor Mr M'Dunsmuir, and had sent him a Large Box of Pills, and a Bottle of Gout Tincture, only two days before he died. This will be a great Thing for you, and especially for Henry, my dear niece, as Sir Sampson and Lady Maclaughlan are going to London directly to take his Seat in Parliament ; and she will make a point of Paying you every attention, and will Matronize you to the play, and any other Public places you may wish to go ; as both my Sisters and I are of opinion you are rather Young to matronize yourself yet, and you could not get a more

Respectable Matron than Lady MacLaughlan. I hope Harry won't take it amiss, if Sir Sampson does not pay him so much Attention as he might expect ; but he says that he will not be master of a moment of his own Time in London. He will be so much taken up with the King and the Duke of York, that he is afraid he will Disoblige a great Number of the Nobility by it, besides injuring his own health by such Constant application to business. He is to make a very fine Speech in Parliament, but it is not yet Fixed what his First Motion is to be upon. He himself wishes to move for a New Subsidy to the Emperor of Germany ; but Lady MacLaughlan is of opinion, that it would be better to Bring in a Bill for Building a bridge over the Water of Dlin ; which, to be sure, is very much wanted, as a Horse and Cart were drowned at the Ford last Speat. We are All, I am happy to Say, in excellent Health. Becky is recovering from the Measles as well as could be Wished, and the Rose * is quite gone out of Bella's Face. Beenie has been prevented from Finishing a most Beautiful Pair of bottle Sliders for your Ladyship by a whitlow, but it is now Mending, and I hope will be done in Time to go with Babby's Vase Carpet, which is extremely elegant, by Sir S. and Lady MacLaughlan. This Place is in great beauty at present, and the new Byre is completely finished. My Sisters and I regret Excessively that Henry and you should have seen Glenfern to such disadvantage ; but when next you favour us with a visit, I hope it will be in Summer, and the New Byre you will think a Prodigious Improvement. Our dear Little Grand-niece is in great health, and much improved. We reckon her Extremely like our Family, Particularly Becky ; though she has a great Look of Bella, at the Same Time, when she Laughs. Excuse the Shortness of this Letter, my

* Erysipelas.

dear Niece, as I shall Write a much Longer one by Lady Maclaughlan.

“ Meantime, I remain, my

“ Dear Lady Juliana, yours and

“ Henry’s most affect. aunt,

“ GRIZZEL DOUGLAS.”

In spite of her husband’s remonstrance, Lady Juliana persisted in her resolution of attending her sister-in-law’s masked ball, from which she returned, worn out with amusement, and surfeited with pleasure ; protesting all the while she dawdled over her evening breakfast the following day, that there was nobody in the world so much to be envied as Lady Lindore. Such jewels ! such dresses ! such a house ! such a husband ! so easy and good-natured, and rich and generous ! She was sure Lindore did not care what his wife did. She might give what parties she pleased ; go where she liked ; spend as much money as she chose ; and he would never trouble his head about the matter. She was quite certain Lady Lindore had not a single thing to wish for : *ergo*, she must be the happiest woman in the world ! All this was addressed to Henry, who had, however, attained the happy art of not hearing above one word out of a hundred that happened to fall from the “ angel lips of his adored Julia ; ” and, having finished the newspapers, and made himself acquainted with all the blood-horses, thorough-bred *fillies*, and brood mares therein set forth, with a yawn and whistle sauntered away to G——’s, to look at the last regulation epaulettes.

Not long after, as Lady Juliana was stepping into the carriage that was to whirl her to Bond Street, she was met by her husband ; who, with a solemnity of manner that would have startled any one but his volatile lady, requested she would return with him into the house, as he wished to converse with her upon a subject of some

importance. He prevailed on her to return, upon condition that he would not detain her above five minutes : when, shutting the drawing-room doors, he said, with earnestness, " I think, Julia, you were talking of Lady Lindore this morning : oblige me by repeating what you said, as I was reading the papers, and really did not attend much to what passed."

Her ladyship, in extreme surprise, wondered how Harry could be so tiresome and absurd as to stop her airing for any such purpose. She really did not know what she said. How could she ? It was more than an hour ago.

" Well, then, say what you think of her now," cried Douglas, impatiently.

" Think of her ! why, what all the world must think—that she is the happiest woman in it. She looked so uncommonly well last night, and was in *such* spirits, in her fancy dress, before she masked—quite the life and soul of the assembly. After that, I lost sight of her."

" As every one else has done—she has not been seen since. Her favourite St Leger is missing too, and there is hardly a doubt but they are gone off together."

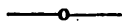
Even Lady Juliana was shocked at this intelligence, though the folly, more than the wickedness, of the thing seemed to strike her mind ; but Henry was no nice observer, and was therefore completely satisfied with the disapprobation she expressed for her sister-in-law's conduct.

" I am so sorry for poor dear Lindore," said Lady Juliana, after having exhausted herself in invectives against his wife. " Such a generous creature as he to be used in such a manner—it is quite shocking to think of it ! If he had been an ill-natured stingy wretch, it would have been nothing ; but Frederick is such a noble-hearted creature—I dare say he would give me a

thousand pounds if I were to ask him, for he don't care about money."

"Lord Lindore takes the matter very coolly, I understand," replied her husband; "but—don't be alarmed, dear Julia—your father has suffered a little from the violence of his feelings. He has had a sort of apoplectic fit, but is not considered in immediate danger."

Lady Juliana burst into tears, desired the carriage might be put up, as she should not go out, and even declared her intention of abstaining from Mrs D.'s assembly that evening. Henry warmly commended the extreme propriety of these measures; and, not to be outdone in greatness of mind, most heroically sent an apology to a grand military dinner at the Duke of Y——'s; observing, at the same time, that, in the present state of the family, one or two friends to a quiet family dinner was as much as they should be up to.



Chapter xxiv.

— I but purpose to embark with thee
On the smooth surface of a summer sea,
While gentle zephyrs play in prosp'rous gales,
And Fortune's favour fills the swelling sails.

Henry and Emma.

HOW long these voluntary sacrifices to duty and propriety might have been made, it would not be difficult to guess; but Lady Juliana's approaching confinement rendered her seclusion more and more a matter of necessity; and, shortly after these events took place, she presented her delighted husband with a son. Henry lost no time in announcing the birth of his child to General Cameron; and, at the same time, requesting he would stand godfather, and

give his name to the child. The answer was as follows:—

Hort Lodge, Berks.

“DEAR HENRY,

“By this time twelvemonth, I hope it will be my turn to communicate to you a similar event in my family, to that which your letter announces to me. As a preliminary step, I am just about to march into quarters for life, with a young woman, daughter to my steward. She is healthy, good-humoured, and of course vulgar; since she is no connoisseur in china, and never spoke to a pug-dog in her life.

“Your allowance will be remitted regularly from my banker until the day of my death; you will then succeed to ten thousand pounds, secured to your children, which is all you have to expect from me. If, after this, you think it worth your while, you are very welcome to give your son the name of yours faithfully,
WILLIAM CAMERON.”

Henry's consternation at the contents of this epistle was almost equalled by Juliana's indignation. The daughter of a steward!—heavens! it made her sick to think of it. It was too shocking! The man ought to be shut up. Henry ought to prevent him from disgracing his connexions in such a manner. There ought to be a law against old men marrying”——

“And young ones too,” groaned Douglas, as he thought of the debts he had contracted on the faith and credit of being the general's heir; for, with all the sanguine presumption of thoughtless youth and buoyant spirits, Henry had no sooner found his fault forgiven, than he immediately fancied it forgotten, and himself completely restored to favour. His friends and the world were of the same opinion; and, as the future possessor of immense wealth, he found nothing so easy

as to borrow money and contract debts, which he now saw the impossibility of ever discharging. Still he flattered himself the general might only mean to frighten him ; or he might relent ; or the marriage might go off ; or he might not have any children ; and, with these *mighty* hopes, things went on as usual for some time longer. Lady Juliana, who, to do her justice, was not of a more desponding character than her husband, had also her stock of hopes and expectations always ready to act upon. She was quite sure, that if papa ever came to his senses (for he had remained in a state of stupefaction since the apoplectic stroke), he would forgive her, and take her to live with him, now that that vile Lady Lindore was gone : or if he should never recover, she was equally sure of benefiting by his death ; for, though he had said he was not to leave her a shilling, she did not believe it. She was sure papa would never do anything so cruel ; and, at any rate, if he did, Lindore was so generous, he would do something very handsome for her ; and so forth.

At length the bubbles burst. The same paper that stated the marriage of General William Cameron to Judith Broadcast, spinster, announced, in all the dignity of woe, the death of that most revered nobleman and eminent statesman, Augustus, Earl of Courtland.

In weak minds it has generally been remarked that no medium can be maintained. Where hope holds her dominion, she is too buoyant to be accompanied by her anchor ; and between her and despair there are no gradations. Desperate, indeed, now became the condition of the misjudging pair. Lady Juliana's name was not even mentioned in her father's will, and the general's marriage rendered his settlements no longer a secret. In all the horrors of desperation, Henry now found himself daily beset by creditors of every description. At length the fatal blow came. Horses—

carriages—everything they could call their own, were seized. The term for which they held the house was expired, and they found themselves on the point of being turned into the street; when Lady Juliana, who had been for two days, as her woman expressed it, *out of one fit into another*, suddenly recovered strength to signify her desire of being conveyed to her brother's house. A hackney coach was procured, into which the hapless victim of her own follies was carried. Shuddering with disgust, and accompanied by her children and their attendants, she was set down at the noble mansion from which she had fled two years before.

Her brother, whom she fortunately found at home, lolling upon a sofa with a new novel in his hand, received her without any marks of surprise; said those things happened every day; hoped Captain Douglas would contrive to get himself extricated from this slight embarrassment; and informed his sister that she was welcome to occupy her old apartments, which had been lately fitted up for Lady Lindore. Then, ringing the bell, he desired the housekeeper might show Lady Juliana up-stairs, and put the children in the nursery; mentioned that he generally dined at eight o'clock; and, nodding to his sister as she quitted the room, returned to his book, as if nothing had occurred to disturb him from it.

In ten minutes after her entrance into Courtland House, Lady Juliana had made greater advances in *religion* and *philosophy* than she had done in the whole nineteen years of her life; for she not only perceived that "out of evil cometh good," but was perfectly ready to admit that "all is for the best," and that "whatever is, is right."

"How lucky is it for me," exclaimed she to herself, as she surveyed the splendid suite of apartments that were destined for her accommodation—"how very

fortunate that things have turned out as they have done; that Lady Lindore should have run off, and that the general's marriage should have taken place just at the time of poor papa's death"—and, in short, Lady Juliana set no bounds to her self-gratulations, on the happy turn of affairs which had brought about this change in her situation.

To a heart not wholly devoid of feeling, and a mind capable of any thing like reflection, the desolate appearance of this magnificent mansion would have excited emotions of a very different nature. The apartments of the late earl, with their wide extended doors and windows, sheeted furniture, and air of dreary order, exhibited that waste and chilling aspect which marks the chambers of death; and even Lady Juliana shuddered, she knew not why, as she passed through them.

Those of Lady Lindore presented a picture not less striking, could her thoughtless successor have profited by the lesson they offered. Here was all that the most capricious fancy, the most boundless extravagance, the most refined luxury, could wish for or suggest.

"I wonder how Lady Lindore could find in her heart to leave this delicious boudoir," observed Lady Juliana to the old housekeeper.

"I rather wonder, my lady, how she could find in her heart to leave these pretty babes," returned the good woman, as a little boy came running into the room, calling "mamma, mamma!" Lady Juliana had nothing to say to children beyond a "How d'ye do, love?" and the child, after regarding her for a moment with a look of disappointment, ran away back to his nursery.

When Lady Juliana had fairly settled herself in her new apartments, and the tumult of delight began to subside, it occurred to her that something must be done for poor Harry, whom she had left in the hands of a

brother officer, in a state little short of distraction. She accordingly went in search of her brother, to request his advice and assistance; and found him, it being nearly dark, preparing to set out on his morning's ride. Upon hearing the situation of his brother-in-law, he declared himself ready to assist Mr Douglas as far as he was able, but he had just learned from his people of business that his own affairs were somewhat involved. The late earl had expended enormous sums on political purposes—Lady Lindore had run through a prodigious deal of money, he believed; and he himself had some debts, amounting, he was told, to seventy thousand pounds. Lady Juliana was all aghast at this information, which was delivered with the most perfect *nonchalance* by the earl, while he amused himself with his Newfoundland dog. Unable to conceal her disappointment at these effects of her brother's "liberality and generosity," Lady Juliana burst into tears.

The earl's sensibility was akin to his generosity; he gave money (or rather allowed it to be taken) freely, when he had it, from indolence and easiness of temper; he hated the sight of distress in any individual, because it occasioned trouble, and was, in short, a *bore*. He therefore made haste to relieve his sister's alarm, by assuring her that these were mere trifles: that, as for Douglas's affairs, he would order his agent to arrange everything in his name—hoped to have the pleasure of seeing him at dinner—recommended to his sister to have some pheasant-pie for luncheon; and, calling Carlo, set out upon his ride.

However much Lady Juliana had felt mortified and disappointed at learning the state of her brother's finances, she began, by degrees, to extract the greatest consolation from the comparative insignificance of her own debts to those of the earl; and accordingly, in high spirits at this newly discovered and judicious source

of comfort, she despatched the following note to her husband:—

“DEAREST HENRY,

“I have been received in the kindest manner imaginable by Frederick, and have been put in possession of my old apartments, which are so much altered I should never have known them. They were furnished by Lady Lindore, who really has a divine taste. I long to show you all the delights of this abode. Frederick desired me to say that he expects to see you here at dinner, and that he will take charge of paying all our bills whenever he gets money. Only think of his owing a hundred thousand pounds, besides all papa’s and Lady Lindore’s debts! I assure you I was almost ashamed to tell him of ours, they sounded so trifling; but it is quite a relief to find other people so much worse. Indeed, I always thought it quite natural for us to run in debt, considering that we had no money to pay anything, while Courtland, who is as rich as a Jew, is so hampered. I shall expect you at eight; until when, adieu, *mio caro*,

“YOUR JULIE.

“I am quite wretched about you.”

This tender and consolatory billet Henry had not the satisfaction of receiving, having been arrested, shortly after his wife’s departure, at the suit of Mr Shagg, for the sum of two thousand some odd hundreds, for carriages jobbed, bought, exchanged, repaired, returned, &c.

Lady Juliana’s horror and dismay at the news of her husband’s arrest was excessive. Her only ideas of confinement were taken from those pictures of the Bastille and Inquisition that she had read so much of in French and German novels; and the idea of a prison was in-

disolubly united in her mind with bread and water, chains and straw, dungeons and darkness. Callous and selfish, therefore, as she might be, she was not yet so wholly void of all natural feeling as to think with indifference of the man she had once fondly loved reduced to such a pitiable condition.

Almost frantic at the phantom of her own creation, she flew to her brother's apartment, and, in the wildest and most incoherent manner, besought him to rescue her poor Henry from chains and a dungeon.

With some difficulty Lord Courtland at length apprehended the extent of his brother-in-law's misfortune; and, with his usual *sang froid*, smiled at his sister's simplicity, assured her the King's Bench was the pleasantest place in the world; that some of his own most particular friends were there, who gave capital dinners, and led the most desirable lives imaginable.

"And will he really not be fed on bread and water, and wear chains, and sleep upon straw?" asked the tender wife, in the utmost surprise and delight. "Oh, then, he is not so much to be pitied; though I dare say he would rather get out of prison, too."

The earl promised to obtain his release the following day; and Lady Juliana returned to her toilette, with a much higher opinion of prisons than she had ever entertained before.

Lord Courtland, for once in his life, was punctual to his promise; and even interested himself so thoroughly in Douglas's affairs, though without inquiring into any particulars, as to take upon himself the discharge of his debts, and to procure leave for him to exchange into a regiment of the line, then under orders for India.

Upon hearing of this arrangement, Lady Juliana's grief and despair, as usual, set all reason at defiance. She would not suffer her dear, dear Harry, to leave her. She knew she could not live without him—she

was sure she should die ; and Harry would be sea-sick, and grow so yellow and so ugly, that, when he came back, she should never have any comfort in him again.

Henry, who had never doubted her readiness to accompany him, immediately hastened to assuage her anguish, by assuring her that it had always been his intention to take her along with him.

That was worse and worse :—she wondered how he could be so barbarous and absurd as to think of her leaving all her friends, and going to live amongst savages. She had done a great deal in living so long contentedly with him in Scotland ; but she never could, nor would, make such another sacrifice. Besides, she was sure poor Courtland could not do without her ; she knew he never would marry again ; and who would take care of his dear children, and educate them properly, if she did not ? It would be too ungrateful to desert Frederick, after all he had done for them.

The pride of the man, as much as the affection of the husband, was irritated by this resistance to his will ; and a violent scene of reproach and recrimination terminated in an eternal farewell.

Chapter xxv.

In age, in infancy, from others' aid
Is all our hope ; to teach us to be kind,
That nature's first, last lesson.

YOUNG.

THE neglected daughter of Lady Juliana Douglas experienced all the advantages naturally to be expected from her change of situation. Her watchful aunt superintended the years of her infancy, and all that a tender and judicious mother *could* do—

all that most mothers *think* they do—she performed. Mrs Douglas, though not a woman either of words or systems, possessed a reflecting mind, and a heart warm with benevolence towards every thing that had a being ; and all the best feelings of her nature were excited by the little outcast, thus abandoned by her unnatural parent. As she pressed the unconscious babe to her bosom, she thought how blest she should have been, had a child of her own thus filled her arms ; but the reflection called forth no selfish murmurs from her chastened spirit. While the tear of soft regret trembled in her eye, that eye was yet raised in gratitude to Heaven for having called forth those delightful affections which might otherwise have slumbered in her heart.

Mrs Douglas had read much, and reflected more ; and many faultless theories of education had floated in her mind. But her good sense soon discovered how unavailing all theories were whose foundations rested upon the inferred wisdom of the teacher ; and how intricate and unwieldy must be the machinery for the human mind where the human hand alone is to guide and uphold it. To engraft into her infant soul the purest principles of religion, was therefore the chief aim of Mary's preceptress. The fear of God was the only restraint imposed upon her dawning intellect ; and from the Bible alone was she taught the duties of morality—not in the form of a dry code of laws, to be read with a solemn face on Sundays, or learned with weeping eyes as a week-day task—but, in lowly imitation of her Divine Master, adapted to her youthful capacity by judicious illustration, and familiarised to her taste by hearing its stories and precepts from the lips she best loved. Even as He,—

“Wiser by far than all the sons of men,
Yet teaching ignorance in simple speech,

As thou would'st take an infant in thy lap
And lesson him with his own artless tale,"—

Mrs Douglas was the friend and confidant of her pupil : to her all her hopes and fears, wishes and dreads, were confided ; and the first effort of her reason was the discovery, that, to please her aunt, she must study to please her Maker.

"L'inutilité de la vie des femmes, est la premier source de leurs désordres."

Mrs Douglas was fully convinced of the truth of this observation, and that the mere selfish cares and vulgar bustle of life are not sufficient to satisfy the immortal soul, however they may serve to engross it.

A portion of Mary's time was therefore devoted to the daily practice of the great duties of life ; in administering, in some shape or other, to the wants and misfortunes of her fellow-creatures, without requiring from them that their virtue should have been immaculate, or expecting that their gratitude should be everlasting.

"It is better," thought Mrs Douglas, "that we should sometimes be deceived by others, than that we should learn to deceive ourselves ; and the charity and good-will that is suffered to lie dormant, or feed itself on speculative acts of beneficence, for want of proper objects to call it into use, will soon become the corroding rust that will destroy the best feelings of our nature."

In the family of her nurse Mary took a warm interest, but more especially in the welfare of her foster-brother, who—whether from having been robbed of his infant dues on her account, or from whatever cause—had been always a puny delicate child, altogether unlike the hardy mountain race from which he had sprung. Indeed, independent of the claim of fostership, little Angus was an interesting boy. His features and complexion were

of that delicate kind which usually accompany hair of a pale golden or reddish cast, and his light-blue eyes were expressive of thought and sweetness beyond his years and station. Mary had herself taught him to read : with her first pocket-money she had bought a Bible for him, and all she learnt herself of its heavenly lore was treasured up and communicated to Angus, who, on his part, was never so happy as in listening to his dear young mistress, or in repeating to her some portion of Scripture, or psalm, or simple paraphrase, which he had committed to memory. But, as the young spirit's light increased, the bodily strength diminished, notwithstanding all that care and kindness could do. Angus gradually grew paler, and thinner, and weaker ; but, so gently was life ebbing away, none deemed that death was so near.

A succession of wet stormy days had prevented Mary from visiting her *protégé* for a longer period than usual ; but as soon as she could venture abroad, she hastened with her little basket of good things to the cottage of the M'Kinnons.

She was met by her nurse outside the door of the cabin, who told her, with tears, that Angus had kept his bed for two days ; that he had not taken food and scarcely spoken, except to ask for his young mistress, that he might repeat to her a hymn he had learnt ; and he had made his mother promise, that even if he should be asleep when she came, she was to waken him.

Mary entered, and advanced to the bed where the boy lay with his eyes closed. " I am come at last, dear Angus," said she, taking the little emaciated hand that lay on his breast ; " how are you to-day ? "

At the sound of her voice, a faint smile shone on his face, and he half opened his sweet, but now filmy, eyes as he softly whispered, " Dinna waken me, I'm ga'en hame ; " then closed them as in sleep.*

* A real incident.

"He has fallen asleep," said Mary in a low voice to his mother, as she glided away on tiptoe; "do not disturb him, and I dare say he will be better when he awakes." But Angus awoke no more in this world; he had indeed gone to a happy, an eternal home!

How calmly sinks that child to rest!
 How tranquil is his little breast!
 Of such the Saviour's kingdom's made,—
 He knew it when he meekly said,
 "I'm going home!"

And where is home? oh, tell me where,
 And lead ~~my~~ weary footsteps there:—
 Home is with God—it is in Heaven—
 Yet here to man is kindly given
 A type—a mystic home.

It is a sweet, a peaceful rest;
 The Christian finds it in his breast
 When Faith, and Love, and Hope unite
 With holy thoughts and life upright:
 Oh, seek and find that home!

But how shall I that home attain?
 Not of myself—the thought were vain;
 Fast bound with earthly ties and cares,
 My own vain heart and Satan's snares,
 I seek—but find no home!

Thy Saviour's love the gift bestows,
 Thy thralldom well the Saviour knows;
 Go—in thy bonds to him complain,
 Ask—and he'll break the galling chain,
 And lead thee gently home.

And may the boon to me be given,
 A home on earth - a type of heaven;
 Then Faith, and Hope, and Love be mine,—
 Ah, no! my Saviour, all are thine:
 Lord, take thy wanderer home!

Lord ! when my dying hour is near,
 And weeping friends would keep me here,
 Let *theirs* and *mine* this solace be,—
 That none can die who live to Thee :
 Death is but going home !



Chapter xxxj.

Not but the human fabric from the birth
 Imbibes a flavour of its parent earth ;
 As various tracts enforce a various toil,
 The manners speak the idiom of their soil.

GRAY.

ALTHOUGH Mary strenuously applied herself to the uses of life, its embellishments were by no means neglected. She was happily endowed by nature ; and, under the judicious management of her aunt, made rapid though unostentatious progress in the improvement of the talents committed to her care. Without having been blessed with the advantages of a dancing-master, her step was light, and her motions free and graceful ; and if her aunt had not been able to impart to her the favourite graces of the most fashionable singer of the day, neither had she thwarted the efforts of her own natural taste in forming a style full of simplicity and feeling. In the modern languages she was perfectly skilled ; and if her drawings wanted the enlivening touches of the master to give them effect, as an atonement they displayed a perfect knowledge of the rules of perspective, and the study of the bust.

All this was, however, mere leather and prunella to the ladies of Glenfern ; and many were the cogitations and consultations that took place on the subject of Mary's mismanagement. According to their ideas, there could be but one good system of education ; and

that was the one that had been pursued with them, and through them transmitted to their nieces.

To attend the parish church, and remember the text ; to observe who was there, and who was *not* there ; and to wind up the evening with a sermon stuttered and stammered through by one of the girls (the worst reader always piously selected, for the purpose of improving their reading), and particularly addressed to the laird, openly and avowedly snoring in his arm chair, though at every pause starting up with a peevish "Weel?"—this was the sum total of their religious duties. Their moral virtues were much upon the same scale : to knit stockings, scold servants, cement china, trim bonnets, lecture the poor, and look up to Lady MacLaughlan, comprised nearly their whole code. But these were the virtues of ripened years and enlarged understandings ; what their pupils might hope to arrive at, but could not presume to meddle with. *Their* merits consisted in being compelled to sew certain large portions of white work ; learning to read and write in the worst manner ; occasionally wearing a collar ; and learning the notes on the spinnet. These acquirements, accompanied with a great deal of lecturing and fault-finding, sufficed for the first fifteen years ; when the two next, passed at a provincial boarding-school, were supposed to impart every graceful accomplishment to which women could attain.

Mrs Douglas's method of conveying instruction, it may easily be imagined, did not square with their ideas on that subject. They did nothing themselves without a bustle ; and to do a thing quietly, was to them the same as not doing it at all—it could not be done, for nobody had ever heard of it. In short, like many other worthy people, their ears were their only organs of intelligence : they believed everything they were told ; but, unless they were told, they believed nothing. They had never heard Mrs Douglas expatiate on the import-

ance of the trust reposed in her, or enlarge on the difficulties of female education; *ergo*, Mrs Douglas could have no idea of the nature of the duties she had undertaken.

Their visits to Lochmarlie only served to confirm the fact. Miss Jacky deponed, that, during the month she was there, she never could discover when or how it was that Mary got her lessons: luckily the child was quick, and had contrived, poor thing! to pick up things wonderfully, nobody knew how, for it was really astonishing to see how little pains were bestowed upon her; and the worst of it was, that she seemed to do just as she liked, for nobody ever heard her reproved, and every body knew that young people never could have enough said to them. All this differed widely from the *eclat* of their system, and could not fail of causing great disquiet to the sisters.

"I declare, I'm quite confounded at all this!" said Miss Grizzy, at the conclusion of Miss Jacky's communication. "It really appears as if Mary, poor thing! was getting no education at all; and yet she *can* do things, too. I can't understand it! And it's very odd in Mrs Douglas to allow her to be so much neglected, for certainly Mary's constantly with herself; which, to be sure, shows that she is very much spoilt—nobody can dispute that! for although our girls are as fond of us as, I am sure, any creatures can be, yet, at the same time, they are always very glad—which is quite natural—to get away from us."

"I think it's high time Mary had done something fit to be seen," said Miss Nicky. "She is now sixteen, past."

"Most girls of Mary's time of life, that ever I had any thing to do with," replied Jacky, with a certain wave of the head, peculiar to sensible women, "had something to show before her age. Bella had worked

the globe long before she was sixteen ; and Babby did her filigree tea-caddy the first quarter she was at Miss Macgowk's," glancing with triumph from the one which hung in a gilt frame over the mantelpiece, to the other which stood on the tea-table, shrouded in a green bag.

"And, to be sure," rejoined Grizzy, "although Betsy's skreen did cost a great deal of money—that can't be denied ; and her father certainly grudged it very much at the time—there's no doubt of that ; yet certainly it does her the greatest credit, and is a great satisfaction to us all to have these things to show. I am sure nobody would ever think that ass was made of crape ; and how naturally it seems to be eating the beautiful chenille thistle ! I declare, I think the ass is as like an ass as any thing can be !"

"And as to Mary's drawing," continued the narrator of her deficiencies, "there is not one of them fit for framing ; mere scratches with a chalk pencil—what any child might do."

"And to think," said Nicky, with indignation, "how little Mrs Douglas seemed to think of the handsome coloured views of Inverary and Dunkeld the girls did at Miss Macgowk's !"

"All our girls have the greatest genius for drawing," observed Grizzy ; "there can be no doubt of that ; but it's a thousand pities, I'm sure, that none of them seem to like it. To be sure, they say—what I dare say is very true—that they can't get such good paper as they got at Miss Macgowk's ; but they have showed that they *can* do, for their drawings are quite astonishing. Somebody lately took them to be Mr Touchup's own doing ; and I'm sure there couldn't be a greater compliment than that ! I represented all that to Mrs Douglas, and urged her very strongly to give Mary the benefit of at least a quarter of Miss Macgowk's,

were it only for the sake of her carriage ; or, at least, to make her wear our collar."

This was the tenderest of all themes, and bursts of sorrowful exclamations ensued. The collar had long been a galling yoke upon their minds ; its iron had entered into their very souls ; for it was a collar presented to the family of Glenfern by the wisest, virtuous, best of women and of grandmothers, the good Lady Girnachgowl ; and had been worn in regular rotation by every female of the family, till now, that Mrs Douglas positively refused to subject Mary's pliant form to its thralldom. Even the laird, albeit no connoisseur in any shapes save those of his kine, was of opinion, that, since the thing was in the house, it was a pity it should be lost. Not Venus's girdle ever was supposed to confer greater charms than the Girnachgowl collar.

"It's really most distressing !" said Miss Grizzy to her friend, Lady Maclaughlan. "Mary's back won't be worth a farthing ; and we have always been quite famous for our backs."

"Humph !—that's the reason people are always so glad to see them, child."

With regard to Mary's looks, opinions were not so decided. Mr Douglas thought her, what she was, an elegant, interesting-looking girl. The laird, as he peered at her over his spectacles, pronounced her to be but a shilpit thing, though weel aneugh, considering the ne'er-do-weels that were aught her. Miss Jacky opined, that she would have been quite a different creature had she been brought up like any other girl. Miss Grizzy did not know what to think ; she certainly was pretty—nobody could dispute that : at the same time, many people would prefer Bella's looks ; and Babby was certainly uncommonly comely. Miss Nicky thought it was no wonder she looked pale sometimes : she never

supped her broth in a wise-like way at dinner ; and it was a shame to hear of a girl of Mary's age being set up with tea to her breakfast, and wearing white petticoats in winter—and such roads, too !

Lady Maclaughlan pronounced (and that was next to a special revelation) that the girl would be handsome when she was forty, not a day sooner ; and she would be clever, for her mother was a fool ; and foolish mothers had always wise children, and *vice versa*, “and your mother was a very clever woman, girls—humph !”

Thus passed the early years of the almost forgotten twin ; blest in the warm affection and mild authority of her more than mother. Sometimes Mrs Douglas half-formed the wish that her beloved pupil should mix in society, and become known to the world ; but when she reflected on the dangers of that world, and on the little solid happiness its pleasures afford, she repressed the wish, and only prayed she might be allowed to rest secure in the simple pleasures she then enjoyed. “Happiness is not a plant of this earth,” said she to herself with a sigh ; “but God gives peace and tranquillity to the virtuous in all situations, and under every trial. Let me, then, strive to make Mary virtuous, and leave the rest to Him who alone knoweth what is good for us !”

Chapter xxvii.

Th' immortal line in sure succession reigns,
 The fortune of the family remains,
 And grandsires' grandsons the long list contains.
Dryden's Virgil.

We are such stuff
 As dreams are made of; and our little life
 Is rounded with a sleep.

Tempest.

BUT Mary's back, and Mary's complexion, now ceased to be the first objects of interest at Glenferri; for, to the inexpressible delight and amazement of the sisters, Mrs Douglas, after due warning, became the mother of a son. How this event had been brought about without the prescience of Lady MacLaughlan, was past the powers of Miss Grizzy's comprehension. To the last moment, they had been sceptical; for Lady MacLaughlan had shook her head and humphed whenever the subject was mentioned. For several months they had therefore vibrated between their own sanguine hopes and their oracle's disheartening doubt; and, even when the truth was manifest, a sort of vague tremor took possession of their minds as to what Lady MacLaughlan would think of it.

"I declare I don't very well know how to announce this happy event to Lady MacLaughlan," said Miss Grizzy, as she sat in a ruminating posture, with her pen in her hand. "It will give her the greatest pleasure, I know that; she has such a regard for our family, she would go any lengths for us. At the same time, every body must be sensible it is a delicate matter to tell a person of Lady MacLaughlan's skill they have been mistaken. I'm sure I don't know how she may take it; and yet she can't suppose it will make any difference in

our sentiments for her. She must be sensible we have all the greatest respect for her opinion—there can be no doubt about that.”

“The wisest people are sometimes mistaken,” observed Miss Jacky.

“I’m sure, Jacky, that’s very true,” said Grizzy, brightening up at the brilliancy of this remark—“nobody can deny that.”

“And it’s better she should have been mistaken than Mrs Douglas,” followed up Miss Nicky.

“I declare, Nicky, you are perfectly right; and I shall just say so at once to Lady Maclaughlan.”

The epistle was forthwith commenced by the enlightened Grizelda. Miss Joan applied herself to the study of “Letters to a Young Man on his Entrance into Life,” which she was determined to make herself mistress of for the benefit of her grand-nephew; and Miss Nicholas fell to reckoning all who could, would, or should be at the christening, that she might calculate upon the quantity of *dreaming-bread* that would be required. The younger ladies were busily engaged in divers and sundry disputes regarding the right of succession to a once-white lutestring negligée of their mother’s, which three of them had laid their accounts with figuring in at the approaching celebration. The old gentleman was the only one in the family who partook not in the least of the general happiness. He had got into a habit of being fretted about every thing that happened, and he could not entirely divest himself of it even upon this occasion. His parsimonious turn, too, had considerably increased; and his only criterion of judging of any thing was according to what it would bring.

“Sorra tak me, if one wadna think this was the first bairn that ever was born! What’s a’ the fraize aboot, ye gowks? (to his daughters)—a whingin’ brat! that’ll

tak mair out o' fowks' pockets than e'er it'll put into them! Mony a guid profitable beast's been brought into the world, and ne'er a word in its head."

All went on smoothly. Lady Maclaughlan testified no resentment. Miss Jacky had a complete system of manly education all ready at her finger-ends; and Miss Nicky was more serene than could have been expected, considering, as she did, how the servants at Lochmarlie must be living at hack and manger. It had been decided at Glenfern that the infant heir to its consequence could not with propriety be christened anywhere but at the seat of his forefathers. Mr and Mrs Douglas had good-humouredly yielded the point! and, as soon as she was able for the change, the whole family took up their residence for a season under the paternal roof.

Blessful visions floated around the pillows of the happy spinsters the night preceding the christening, which were duly detailed at the breakfast-table the following morning.

"I declare I don't know what to think of my dream," began Miss Grizzy. "I dreamt that Lady Maclaughlan was upon her knees to you, brother, to get you to take an emetic; and, just as she had mixed it up so nicely in some of our black-currant jelly, little Norman snatched it out of your hand, and ran away with it."

"You're enough to turn ony body's stamick wi' your nonsense," returned the laird gruffly.

"And I," said Miss Jacky, "thought I saw you standing in your shirt, brother, as straight as a rash, and good Lady Girnachgowl buckling her collar round you with her own hands."

"I wish ye wad na deive me wi' your havers!" still more indignantly, and turning his shoulder to the fair dreamer, as he continued to con over the newspaper.

"And I," cried Miss Nicky, eager to get her mystic

tales disclosed, "I thought, brother, I saw you take and throw all the good dreaming-bread into the ash-hole."

"By my troth, an' ye deserve to be thrown after't!" exclaimed the exasperated laird, as he quitted the room in high wrath, muttering to himself, "Hard case—canna get peace—eat my vittals—fules—tawpies—clavers!" &c., &c.

"I declare I can't conceive why Glenfern should be so ill-pleased at our dreams," said Miss Grizzy. "Every body knows dreams are always contrary,—nobody can dispute that; and, even were it otherwise, I'm sure I should think no shame to take an emetic, especially when Lady Maclaughlan was at the trouble of mixing it up so nicely."

"And we have all worn good Lady Girnachgowl's collar before now," said Miss Jacky.

"I think I had the worst of it, that had all my good dreaming-bread destroyed," added Miss Nicky.

"Nothing could be more natural than your dreams," said Mrs Douglas, "considering how all these subjects have engrossed you for some time past. You, aunt Grizzy, may remember how desirous you were of administering one of Lady Maclaughlan's powders to my little boy yesterday; and you, aunt Jacky, made a point of trying Lady Girnachgowl's collar upon Mary, to convince her how pleasant it was; while you, aunt Nicky, had experienced a great alarm in supposing your cake had been burned in the oven. And these being the most vivid impressions you had received during the day, it was perfectly natural that they should have retained their influence during a portion of the night."

The interpretations were received with high disdain. One and all declared they never dreamed of any thing that *bad* occurred; and therefore the visions of the night portended some extraordinary good-fortune to the family in general, and to little Norman in particular.

"The best fortune I can wish for him, and all of us, for this day, is, that he should remain quiet during the ceremony," said his mother, who was not so elated as Lady Macbeth at the predictions of the sisters.

The christening party mustered strong; and the rites of baptism were duly performed by the Rev. Duncan M'Drone. The little Christian had been kissed by every lady in company, and pronounced by the matrons to be "a dainty little fellow!" and by the misses to be "the sweetest lamb they had ever seen!" The cake and wine was in its progress round the company; when, upon its being tendered to the old gentleman, who was sitting silent in his arm-chair, he abruptly exclaimed, in a most discordant voice, "Hey! what's a' this wastery for?"—and, ere an answer could be returned, his jaw dropped, his eyes fixed, and the laird of Glenfern ceased to breathe!



Chapter xxviii.

They say miracles are past; and we have our philosophical persons to make modern and familiar things supernatural and causeless. Hence it is, that we make trifles of terrors: ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge, when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear.

All's Well that Ends Well.

ALL attempts to reanimate the lifeless form proved unavailing; and the horror and consternation that reigned in the castle of Glenfern may be imagined, but cannot be described. There is perhaps no feeling of our nature so vague, so complicated, so mysterious, as that with which we look upon the cold remains of our fellow-mortals. The dignity with which death invests even the meanest of his victims, inspires us with an awe no living thing can create. The

monarch on his throne is less awful than the beggar in his shroud. The marble features—the powerless hand—the stiffened limbs—oh! who can contemplate these with feelings that can be defined? These are the mockery of all our hopes and fears, our fondest love, our fellest hate. Can it be, that we now shrink with horror from the touch of that hand which but yesterday was fondly clasped in our own? Is that tongue, whose accents even now dwell in our ear, for ever chained in the silence of death? These black and heavy eyelids, are they for ever to seal up in darkness the eyes whose glance no earthly power could restrain? And the spirit which animated the clay, where is it now? Is it rapt in bliss, or dissolved in woe? Does it witness our grief, and share our sorrows? or is the mysterious tie that linked it with mortality for ever broken? and the remembrance of earthly scenes, are they indeed to the enfranchised spirit as the morning dream, or the dew upon the early flower? Reflections such as these naturally arise in every breast. Their influence is felt, though their import cannot always be expressed. The principle is in all the same, however it may differ in its operations.

In the family assembled round the lifeless form that had so long been the centre of their domestic circle, grief showed itself under various forms. The calm and manly sorrow of the son; the saint-like feelings of his wife; the youthful agitation of Mary; the weak superstitious wailings of the sisters; and the loud uncontrolled lamentations of the daughters;—all betokened an intensity of suffering, that arose from the same source, varied according to the different channels in which it flowed. Even the stern Lady Maclaughlan was subdued to something of kindred feeling; and, though no tears dropped from her eyes, she sat by her friends, and sought, in her own way, to soften their affliction.

The assembled guests, who had not yet been able to take their departure, remained in the drawing-room in a sort of restless solemnity, peculiar to seasons of collateral affliction, where all seek to heighten the effect upon others, and shift the lesson from themselves. Various were the surmises and speculations as to the cause of the awful transition that had just taken place.

"Glenfern was not like a man that would have gaen off in this way," said one.

"I dinna ken," said another; "I've noticed a chainge on Glenfern for a good while now."

"I agree with you, sir," said a third: "in my mind, Glenfern's been droopin' very much ever since the last tryst."

"At Glenfern's time o' life, it's no surprisin'," remarked a fourth, who felt perfectly secure of being fifteen years his junior.

"Glenfern wasna that auld, neither," retorted a fifth, whose conscience smote him with being several years his senior.

"But he had a deal of vexation from his family," said an elderly bachelor.

"Ye often see a hale stout man, like our poor friend, go like the snuff of a candle," coughed up a phthisicky gentleman.

"He was aye a tume, boss-lookin' man, ever since I mind him," wheezed out a swoln asthmatic figure.

"An' he took no care of himself," said the laird of Pettlechass. "His diet was not what it should have been at his time of life. An' he was out an' in, up an' down, in a' weathers, wet an' dry."

"Glenfern's doings had nothing to do wi' his death," said an ancient gentlewoman, with solemnity. "They must be strangers here who never heard the bod-word of the family." And she repeated, in Gaelic, words to the following effect: —

"When Lochdow shall turn to a lin,*
 In Glenfern ye'll hear the din;
 When frae Benmore they shool the sna',
 O'er Glenfern the leaves will fa';
 When foreign geer grows on Benmore tap,
 Then the fir-tree will be Glenfern's hap."

"And now, ma'am, will ye be so good as point out the meanin' of this freet," said an incredulous-looking member of the company; "for when I passed Lochdow this morning, I neither saw nor heard of a lin; an' frae this window we can a' see Benmore wi' his white night-cap on; an' he would hae little to do that would try to shool it aff."

"It was neither of the still water nor the stay brae that the word was spoken," said the old lady solemnly; "*they* take no part in our doings: but knew you not that Lochdow himself had lost his sight by cataract? and is not there dule and din enough in Glenfern to-day? And who has not heard that Benmore has had his white locks shaven, and that he has got a fine brown wig instead; and I'll warrant he'll have that on his old grey head the day that Glenfern's laid in his deal coffin."

The company admitted the application was too close to be resisted; but the same sceptic (who, by the by, was only a low-country merchant, elevated by purchase to the dignity of a Highland laird) was seen to shrug his shoulders, and heard to make some sneering remarks on the days of second-sights, and such superstitious nonsense, being past. This was instantly laid hold of; and, amongst many others of the same sort, the truth of the following story was attested by one of the party, as having actually occurred in his family within his own remembrance:—

"As Duncan M'Crae was one evening descending Benvoilloich, he perceived a funeral procession in the

* Cataract.

vale beneath. He was greatly surprised, not having heard of any death in the country ; and this appeared to be the burial of some person of consequence, from the number of the attendants. He made all the haste he could to get down ; and, as he drew near, he counted all the lairds of the country except my father, Sir Murdoch. He was astonished at this, till he recollected that he was away to the low country to his cousin's marriage ; but he felt curious to know who it was, though some unaccountable feeling prevented him from mixing with the followers. He therefore kept on the ridge of the hill, right over their heads, and near enough to hear them speak ; but, although he saw them move their lips, no sound reached his ear. He kept along with the procession in this way, till it reached the Castle Dochart burying-ground, and there it stopped. The evening was close and warm, and a thick mist had gathered in the glen, while the tops of the hills shone like gold. Not a breath of air was stirring ; but the trees that grew round the burying-ground waved and soughed, and some withered leaves were swirled round and round as if by the wind. The company stood awhile to rest, and then they proceeded to open the iron gates of the burying-ground ; but the lock was rusted, and would not open. Then they began to pull down part of the wall ; and Duncan thought how angry his master would be at this, and he raised his voice, and shouted, and hallooed to them, but to no purpose. Nobody seemed to hear him. At last the wall was taken down, and the coffin was lifted over, and just then the sun broke out, and glinted on a new-made grave ; and as they were laying the coffin in it, it gave way, and disclosed Sir Murdoch himself in his dead clothes ; and then the mist grew so thick, Duncan could see no more, and how to get home he knew not ; but when he entered his own door he was bathed in sweat, and white as any

corpse ; and all that he could say was, that he had seen Castle Dochart's burying.

"The following day," continued the narrator, "he was more composed, and gave the account you have now heard ; and three days after came the intelligence of my father's death. He had dropped down in a fit that very evening, when entertaining a large company in honour of his cousin's marriage ; and that day week his funeral passed through Glenvalloch exactly as described by Duncan M'Crae, with all the particulars : the gates of the burying-ground could not be opened ; part of the wall was taken down to admit the coffin, which received some injury, and gave way as they were placing it in the grave."

Even the low-country infidel was silenced by the solemnity of this story ; and soon after the company dispersed, every one panting to be the first to circulate the intelligence of Glenfern's death.

But soon—oh, *how* soon !—"dies in human hearts the thought of death !" Even the paltry detail which death creates, serves to detach our minds from the cause itself. So it was with the family of Glenfern. Their light did not "shine inward ;" and, after the first burst of sorrow, their ideas fastened with avidity on all the paraphernalia of affliction. Mr Douglas, indeed, found much to do, and to direct to be done. The elder ladies began to calculate how many yards of broad hemming and crimped crape would be required, and to form a muster-roll of the company ; with this improvement, that it was to be ten times as numerous as the one that had assembled at the christening : while the young ones busied their imaginations as to the effect of new mourning—a luxury to them hitherto unknown. Mrs Douglas and Mary were differently affected from the other members of the family. Religion and reflection had taught the former the enviable lesson of possessing her soul in

patience under every trial ; and while she inwardly mourned the fate of the poor old man who had been thus suddenly snatched from the only world that ever had engaged his thoughts, her outward aspect was calm and serene. The impression made upon Mary's feelings was of a more powerful nature. She had witnessed suffering, and watched by sick-beds ; but death, and death in so terrific a form, was new to her. She had been standing by her grandfather's chair—her head was bent to his—her hand rested upon his, when, by a momentary convulsion, she beheld the last dread change—the living man transformed into the lifeless corpse. The countenance but now fraught with life and human thoughts, in the twinkling of an eye was covered with the shades of death ! It was in vain that Mary prayed, and reasoned, and strove against the feelings that had been thus powerfully excited. One object alone possessed her imagination—the image of her grandfather dying—dead ; his grim features—his ghastly visage—his convulsive-grasp—were ever present, by day and by night. Her nervous system had received a shock too powerful for all the strength of her understanding to contend with. Mrs Douglas sought, by every means, to soothe her feelings, and divert her attention ; and flattered herself that a short time would allay the perturbation of her youthful emotions.

Five hundred persons, horse and foot, high and low, male and female, graced the obsequies of the laird of Glenfern. Benmore was there in his new wig, and the autumnal leaves dropped on the coffin as it was borne slowly along the vale !

Chapter xxix.

It is no diminution, but a recommendation of human nature, that, in some instances, passion gets the better of reason, and all that we can think is impotent against half what we feel.

Spectator.

“LIFE is a mingled yarn ;” few of its afflictions but are accompanied with some alleviation—none of its blessings that do not bring some alloy. Like most other events that long have formed the object of yearning and almost hopeless wishes, and on which have been built the fairest structure of human felicity, the arrival of the young heir of Glenfern produced a less extraordinary degree of happiness than had been anticipated. The melancholy event which had marked the first ceremonial of his life had cast its gloom alike on all nearly connected with him ; and when time had dispelled the clouds of recent mourning, and restored the mourners to their habitual train of thought and action, somewhat of the novelty which had given him such lively interest in the hearts of the sisters had subsided. The distressing conviction, too, more and more forced itself upon them, that their advice and assistance were likely to be wholly overlooked in the nurture of the infant mind, and management of the thriving frame, of their little nephew. Their active energies therefore, driven back to the accustomed channels, after many murmurs and severe struggles, again revolved in the same sphere as before. True, they sighed and mourned for a time, but soon found occupation congenial to their nature in the little departments of life : dressing crape ; reviving black silk ; converting narrow hems into broad hems ; and, in short, who so busy, who so important, as the ladies of Glenfern ? As Madame de Staël, or de Something, says, “ they fulfilled their

destinies." Their walk lay amongst tapes and pickles ; their sphere extended from the garret to the pantry ; and, often as they sought to diverge from it, their instinct always led them to return to it, as the track in which they were destined to move. There are creatures of the same sort in the male part of the creation, but it is foreign to my purpose to describe them at present. Neither are the trifling and insignificant of either sex to be treated with contempt, or looked upon as useless, by those whom God has gifted with higher powers. In the arrangements of an all-wise Providence, there is nothing created in vain. Every link of that vast chain that embraces creation helps to hold together the various relations of life ; and all is beautiful gradation, from the human vegetable to the glorious archangel.

If patient hope, if unexulting joy, and chastened anticipation, sanctifying a mother's love, could have secured her happiness, Mrs Douglas would have found, in the smiles of her infant, all the comfort her virtue deserved. But she still had to drink of that cup of sweet and bitter which must bathe the lips of all who breathe the breath of life.

While the instinct of a parent's love warmed her heart, as she pressed her infant to her bosom, the sadness of affectionate and rational solicitude stifled every sentiment of pleasure, as she gazed on the altered and drooping form of her adopted daughter—of the child who had already repaid the cares that had been lavished on her, and in whom she descried the promise of a plenteous harvest from the good seed she had sown. Though Mary had been healthy in childhood, her constitution was naturally delicate, and she had latterly outgrown her strength. The shock she had sustained by her grandfather's death, thus operating on a weakened frame, had produced an effect apparently most alarming ; and the efforts she made to exert her-

self only served to exhaust her. She felt all the watchful solicitude, the tender anxieties, of her aunt, and bitterly reproached herself with not better repaying these exertions for her happiness. A thousand times she tried to analyse and extirpate the saddening impression that weighed upon her heart.

"It is not sorrow," reasoned she with herself, "that thus oppresses me; for though I revered my grandfather, yet the loss of his society has scarcely been felt by me. It cannot be fear—the fear of death; for my soul is not so abject as to confine its desires to this sub-lunary scene. What, then, is this mysterious dread that has taken possession of me? Why do I suffer my mind to suggest to me images of horror, instead of visions of bliss? Why can I not, as formerly, picture to myself the beauty and the brightness of a soul casting off mortality? Why must the convulsed grasp, the stifled groan, the glaring eye, for ever come betwixt heaven and me?"

Alas! Mary was unskilled to answer. Hers was the season for feeling, not for reasoning. She knew not that hers was the struggle of imagination, striving to maintain its ascendancy over reality. She had heard, and read, and thought, and talked of death; and even beheld its near approach; but it was of death in its fairest form—in its softest transition: and the veil had been abruptly torn from her eyes; the gloomy pass had suddenly disclosed itself before her, not strewn with flowers, but shrouded in horrors. Like all persons of sensibility, Mary had a disposition to view everything in a *beau-idéal*: whether that is a boon most fraught with good or ill, it were difficult to ascertain. While the delusion lasts, it is productive of pleasure to its possessor; but, oh! the thousand aches that heart is destined to endure, which clings to the stability, and relies on the permanency, of earthly happiness! But

the youthful heart must ever remain a stranger to this saddening truth. Experience only can convince us that happiness is not a plant of this world ; and that, though many an eye had beheld its blossoms, no mortal hand hath ever gathered its fruits. This, then, was Mary's first lesson in what is called the knowledge of life, as opposed to the *beau-idéal* of a young and ardent imagination, in love with life, and luxuriating in its own happiness. And upon such a mind it could not fail of producing a powerful impression.

The anguish Mrs Douglas experienced, as she witnessed the changing colour, lifeless step, and forced smile of her darling *élève*, was not mitigated by the good sense or sympathy of those around her. While Mary had prospered under her management, in the consciousness that she was fulfilling her duty to the best of her abilities she could listen with placid cheerfulness to the broken hints of disapprobation, or forced good wishes for the success of her new-fangled schemes, that were levelled at her by the sisters. But now, when her cares seemed defeated, it was an additional thorn in her heart to have to endure the commonplace wisdom and self-gratulations of the almost exulting aunts ; not that they had the slightest intention of wounding the feelings of their niece, whom they really loved, but the temptation was irresistible of proving that they had been in the right, and she in the wrong, especially as no such acknowledgment had yet been extorted from her.

"It is nonsense to ascribe Mary's dwining to her grandfather's death," said Miss Jacky. "We are all nearer to him in propinquity than she was, and none of our healths have suffered."

"And there's his own daughters," added Miss Grizzy, "who, of course, must have felt a great deal more than anybody else—there can be no doubt of

that. Such sensible creatures as them must feel a great deal; but yet you see how they have got up their spirits—I'm sure it's wonderful!"

"It shows their sense, and the effects of education," said Miss Jacky.

"Girls that sup their porridge will always cut a good figure," quoth Nicky.

"With their fine feelings, I'm sure, we have all reason to be thankful that they have been blest with such hearty stomachs," observed Miss Grizzy: "if they had been delicate, like poor Mary's, I'm sure, I declare, I don't know what we would have done; for certainly they were all most dreadfully affected at their excellent father's death; which was quite natural, poor things! I'm sure there was no pacifying poor Babby; and, even yet, neither Bella nor Betsy can bear to be left alone in a dark room. Tibby has to sleep with them still every night; and a lighted candle too—which is much to their credit—and yet I'm sure it's not with reading. I'm certain—indeed, I think there's no doubt of it—that reading does young people much harm. It puts things into their heads that never would have been there but for books—nobody can dispute that! I declare, I think, reading's a very dangerous thing. I'm certain all Mary's bad health is entirely owing to reading. You know, we always thought she read a great deal too much for her good."

"Much depends upon the choice of books," said Jacky, with an air of the most profound wisdom. "Fordyce's Sermons, and the History of Scotland, are two of the very few books I would put into the hands of a young woman. *Our* girls have read little else,"—casting a look at Mrs Douglas, who was calmly pursuing her work in the midst of this shower of darts, all levelled at her.

"To be sure," returned Grizzy, "it is a thousand

pities that Mary has been allowed to go on so long ; not, I'm sure, that any of us mean to reflect upon you, my dear Mrs Douglas ; for of course it was all owing to your ignorance and inexperience ; and that, you know, you could not help, so it was not your fault ; nobody can blame you. I'm certain you would have done what was right, if you had only known better ; but, of course, we must all know much better than you ; because, you know, we are a great deal older, and especially Lady Maclaughlan, who has the greatest experience in the diseases of old men especially, and infants. Indeed it has been the study of her life almost ; for, you know, poor Sir Sampson is never well ; and, I dare say, if Mary had taken some of her nice worm lozenges, which certainly cured Duncan M'Nab's wife's daughter's little girl of the jaundice, and used that valuable growing embrocation, which we are all sensible made Babby a great deal fatter,—indeed some people thought she grew a great deal too fat, though, for my part, I think it's a good fault to be too fat,—I dare say there would have been nothing the matter with her to-day."

"Mary has been too much accustomed to spend both her time and money amongst idle vagrants," said Nicky.

"Economy of both," subjoined Jacky, with an air of humility, "I confess I have ever been accustomed to consider as virtues. These handsome respectable new bonnets," looking *from* Mrs Douglas, "that our girls got just before their poor father's death, were entirely the fruits of their own savings."

"And I declare," said Grizzy, who did not excel in inuendos, "I declare, for my part—although at the same time, my dear niece, I'm certain you are far from intending it—I really think it's very disrespectful to Sir Sampson and Lady Maclaughlan, in anybody, and

especially such near neighbours, to give more in charity than they do : for, you may be sure, they give as much as they think proper, and they must be the best judges, and can afford to give what they please ; for Sir Sampson could buy and sell all of us a hundred times over, if he liked—there can be no doubt about that ! It's long since the Lochmarlie estate was called seven thousand a-year ; and, besides that, there's the Birken-dale property, and the Glenmavis estate ; and, I'm sure, I can't tell you all what ; but there's no doubt he's a man of immense fortune."

Well it was known, and frequently was it discussed, the iniquity of Mary being allowed to waste her time, and squander her money, amongst the poor, instead of being taught the practical virtues of making her own gowns, and of hoarding up her pocket-money for some selfish gratification.

In colloquies such as these, day after day passed on, without any visible improvement taking place in her health. Only one remedy suggested itself to Mrs Douglas, and that was to remove her to the south of England for the winter. Milder air, and change of scene, she had no doubt would prove efficacious ; and her opinion was confirmed by that of the celebrated Dr ———, who having been summoned to the laird of Pettlechase, had paid a visit at Glenfern *en passant*. How so desirable an event was to be accomplished, was the difficulty. By the death of his father, a variety of business, and an extent of farming, had devolved upon Mr Douglas, which obliged him to fix his residence at Glenfern, and rendered it impossible for him to be long absent from it. Mrs Douglas had engaged in the duties of a nurse to her little boy, and to take him or leave him was equally out of the question.

In this dilemma, the only resource that offered was that of sending Mary for a few months to her mother.

True, it was a painful necessity ; for Mrs Douglas seldom heard from her sister-in-law, and when she did, her letters were short and cold. She sometimes desired a "kiss to her (Mrs Douglas's) little girl ;" and once, in an extraordinary fit of good humour, had actually sent a locket with her hair in a letter by post, for which Mrs Douglas had to pay something more than the value of the present. This was all that Mary knew of her mother, and the rest of her family were still greater strangers to her. Her father remained in a distant station in India, and was seldom heard of. Her brother was gone to sea ; and though she had written repeatedly to her sister, her letters remained unnoticed. Under these circumstances, there was something revolting in the idea of obtruding Mary upon the notice of her relations, and trusting to their kindness even for a few months ; yet her health, perhaps her life, was at stake, and Mrs Douglas felt she had scarcely a right to hesitate.

"Mary has, perhaps, been too long an alien from her own family," said she to herself : "this will be a means of her becoming acquainted with them, and of introducing her to that sphere in which she is probably destined to walk. Under her uncle's roof she will surely be safe, and in the society of her mother and sister she cannot be unhappy. New scenes will give a stimulus to her mind ; the necessity of exertion will brace the languid faculties of her soul ; and a few short months, I trust, will restore her to me such, and even superior to what she was. Why, then, should I hesitate to do what my conscience tells me ought to be done ? Alas ! it is because I selfishly shrink from the pain of separation, and am unwilling to relinquish, even for a season, one of the many blessings heaven has bestowed upon me." And Mrs Douglas, noble and disinterested as ever, rose superior to the weakness that

she felt was besetting her. Mary listened to her communication with a throbbing heart, and eyes suffused with tears: to part from her aunt was agony; but to behold her mother—she to whom she owed her existence,—to embrace a sister too—and one for whom she felt all those mysterious yearnings which twins are said to entertain towards each other,—Oh! there was rapture in the thought; and Mary's buoyant heart fluctuated between the extremes of anguish and delight.

The venerable sisters received the intelligence with much surprise. They did not know very well what to say about it: there was much to be said both for and against it. Lady Maclaughlan had a high opinion of English air; but then they had heard the morals of the people were not so good, and there were a great many dissipated young men in England; though, to be sure, there was no denying but the mineral waters were excellent: and, in short, it ended in Miss Grizzy's sitting down to concoct an epistle to Lady Maclaughlan; in Miss Jacky's beginning to draw up a code of instructions for a young woman upon her entrance into life; and Miss Nicky hoping, that, if Mary did go, she would take care not to bring back any extravagant English notions with her. The younger set debated amongst themselves how many of them would be invited to accompany Mary to England; and from thence fell to disputing the possession of a brown hair-trunk, with a flourished D, in brass letters, on the top.

Mrs Douglas, with repressed feelings, set about offering the sacrifice she had planned; and in a letter to Lady Juliana, descriptive of her daughter's situation, she sought to excite her tenderness without creating an alarm. How far she succeeded, will be seen hereafter. In the meantime, we must take a retrospective glance at the last seventeen years of her ladyship's life.

Chapter XXX.

Her "only labour was to kill the time ;
And labour dire it is, and weary woe."

Castle of Indolence.

YEARS had rolled on, amidst heartless pleasures and joyless amusements, but Lady Juliana was made neither the wiser nor the better by added years and increased experience. Time had in vain turned his glass before eyes still dazzled with the gaudy allurements of the world, for she took "no note of time," but as the thing that was to take her to the Opera and the Park, and that sometimes hurried her excessively, and sometimes bored her to death. At length she was compelled to abandon her chase after happiness, in the only sphere where she believed it was to be found. Lord Courtland's declining health unfitted him for the dissipation of a London life ; and, by the advice of his physician, he resolved upon retiring to a country seat which he possessed in the vicinity of Bath. Lady Juliana was in despair at the thoughts of this sudden wrench from what she termed life : but she had no resource ; for though her good-natured husband gave her the whole of General Cameron's allowance, that merely served as pin-money ; and though her brother was perfectly willing that she and her children should occupy apartments in his house, yet he would have been equally acquiescent had she proposed to remove from it. Lady Juliana had a sort of instinctive knowledge of this, which prevented her from breaking out into open remonstrance. She therefore contented herself with being more than usually peevish and irascible to her servants and children ; and talking to her friends of the prodigious sacrifice she was about to make for her brother and his family, as if it had been

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the cutting off of a hand, or the plucking out of an eye. To have heard her, any one unaccustomed to the hyperbole of fashionable language would have deemed Botany Bay the nearest possible point of destination. Parting from her fashionable acquaintances was tearing herself from all she loved—quitting London was bidding adieu to the world. Of course there could be no society where she was going, but still she would do her duty—she would not desert dear Frederick and his poor children! In short, no martyr was ever led to the stake with half the notions of heroism and self-devotion as those with which Lady Juliana stepped into the barouche that was to conduct her to Beech Park. In the society of piping bullfinches, pink canaries, grey parrots, gold-fish, green squirrels, Italian greyhounds, and French poodles, she sought a refuge from despair. But even these varied charms, after a while, failed to please: the bullfinches grew hoarse—the canaries turned yellow—the parrots became stupid—the gold-fish grew dim—the squirrels were cross—the dogs fought; even a shell-grotto, that was constructing, fell down; and by the time the aviary and conservatory were filled, they had lost their interest. The children were the next subjects for her ladyship's *ennui* to discharge itself upon. Lord Courtland had a son, some years older, and a daughter nearly of the same age as her own. It suddenly occurred to her that they must be educated, and that she would educate the girls herself. As the first step, she engaged two governesses, French and Italian;—modern treatises on the subject of education were ordered from London—looked at, admired, and arranged on gilded shelves and sofa-tables: and, could their contents have exhaled with the odours of their Russian leather bindings, Lady Juliana's dressing-room would have been, what Sir Joshua Reynolds says every seminary of learning is, “an atmosphere of floating

knowledge." But amidst this splendid display of human lore, THE BOOK found no place. She *had* heard of the Bible, however, and even knew it was a book appointed to be read in churches, and given to poor people, along with Rumford soup and flannel shirts; but as the rule of life—as the book that alone could make wise unto salvation, this Christian parent was ignorant as the Hottentot or Hindoo.

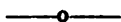
Three days beheld the rise, progress, and decline of Lady Juliana's whole system of education; and it would have been well for the children had the trust been delegated to those better qualified to discharge it. But neither of the preceptresses were better skilled in the only true knowledge. Signora Cicianai was a bigoted Catholic, whose faith hung upon her beads; and Madame Grignon was an *esprit fort*, who had no faith in any thing but *le plaisir*. But the signora's singing was heavenly, and madame's dancing was divine; and what lacked there more?

So passed the first years of being trained for immortality. The children insensibly ceased to be children, and Lady Juliana would have beheld the increasing height and beauty of her daughter with extreme disapprobation, had not that beauty, by awakening her ambition, also excited her affection, if the term affection could be applied to that heterogeneous mass of feelings and propensities that "shape had none distinguishable." Lady Juliana had fallen into an error, very common with wiser heads than hers—that of mistaking the *effect* for the *cause*. She looked no farther than to her union with Henry Douglas for the foundation of all her unhappiness—it never once occurred to her, that her marriage was only the *consequence* of something previously wrong; she saw not the headstrong passions that had impelled her to please herself—no matter at what price. She thought not of the want of principle

—she blushed not at the want of delicacy, that had led her to deceive a parent, and elope with her lover. She therefore considered herself as having fallen a victim to love ; and could she only save her daughter from a similar error, she might yet by her means retrieve her fallen fortune. To implant principles of religion and virtue in her mind, was not within the compass of her own ; but she could scoff at every pure and generous affection—she could ridicule every disinterested attachment—and she could expatiate on the never-fading joys that attend on wealth and titles, jewels and equipages—and all this she did in the belief that she was acting the part of a most wise and tender parent ! The seed, thus carefully sown, promised to bring forth an abundant harvest. At eighteen, Adelaide Douglas was as heartless and ambitious as she was beautiful and accomplished—but the surface was covered with flowers, and who would have thought of analysing the soil ?

It sometimes happens, that the very means used, with success, in the formation of one character, produce a totally opposite effect upon another. The mind of Lady Emily Lindore had undergone exactly the same process in its formation as that of her cousin ; yet in all things they differed. Whether it were the independence of high birth, or the pride of a mind conscious of its own powers, she had hitherto resisted the sophistry of her governesses, and the solecisms of her aunt. But her notions of right and wrong were too crude to influence the general tenor of her life, or operate as restraints upon a naturally high spirit, and impetuous temper. Not all the united efforts of her preceptresses had been able to form a manner for their pupil ; nor could their authority restrain her from saying what she thought, and doing what she pleased ; and, in spite of both precept and example, Lady Emily remained as insupportably natural and sincere as she was beautiful and *piquante*. At six

years old, she had declared her intention of marrying her cousin, Edward Douglas ; and at eighteen, her words were little less equivocal. Lord Courtland, who never disturbed himself about any thing, was rather diverted with this juvenile attachment ; and Lady Juliana, who cared little for her son, and still less for her niece, only wondered how people could be such fools as to think of marrying for love, after she had told them how miserable it would make them.



Chapter xxxj.

Unthought-of frailties cheat us in the wise ;
The fool lies hid in inconsistencies.

POPE.

And for unfelt imaginations
They often feel a world of restless cares.

SHAKESPEARE.

SUCH were the female members of the family to whom Mary was about to be introduced. In her mother's heart she had no place, for of her absent husband and neglected daughter she seldom thought ; and their letters were scarcely read, and rarely answered. Even good Miss Grizzy's elaborate epistle, in which were curiously entwined the death of her brother, and the birth and christening of her grand-nephew, in a truly Gordian manner, remained disentangled. Had her ladyship only read to the middle of the seventh page, she would have learned the indisposition of her daughter, with the various opinions thereupon ; but poor Miss Grizzy's labours were vain, for her letter remains a dead letter to this day. Mrs Douglas was therefore the first to convey the unwelcome intelligence, and to suggest to the mind of the mother that her alienated daughter still retained some claims upon her care and

affection; and, although this was done with all the tenderness and delicacy of a gentle and enlightened mind, it called forth the most bitter indignation from Lady Juliana.

She almost raved at what she termed the base ingratitude and hypocrisy of her sister-in-law. After the sacrifice she had made in giving up her child to her when she had none of her own, it was a pretty return to send her back only to die. But she saw through it. She did not believe a word of the girl's illness: that was all a trick to get rid of her. Now they had a child of their own, they had no use for hers: but she was not to be made a fool of in such a way, and by such people, &c., &c.

"If Mrs Douglas is so vile a woman," said the provoking Lady Emily, "the sooner my cousin is taken from her the better."

"You don't understand these things, Emily," returned her aunt impatiently.

"What things?"

"The trouble and annoyance it will occasion me to take charge of the girl at this time."

"Why at this time more than at any other?"

"Absurd, my dear! how can you ask so foolish a question? Don't you know that you and Adelaide are both to bring out this winter, and how can I possibly do you justice with a dying girl upon my hands?"

"I thought you suspected it was all a trick," continued the persecuting Lady Emily.

"So I do; I haven't the least doubt of it. The whole story is the most improbable stuff I ever heard."

"Then you will have less trouble than you expect."

"But I hate to be made a dupe of, and imposed upon by low cunning. If Mrs Douglas had told me candidly she wished me to take the girl, I should have

thought nothing of it ; but I can't bear to be treated like a fool."

"I don't see any thing at all unbecoming in Mrs Douglas's treatment."

"Then, what can I do with a girl who has been educated in Scotland? She must be vulgar—all Scotch women are so. They have red hands and rough voices; they yawn, and blow their noses, and talk and laugh loud, and do a thousand shocking things. Then, to hear the Scotch brogue—oh, heavens! I should expire every time she opened her mouth!"

"Perhaps my sister may not speak so *very* broad," kindly suggested Adelaide in her sweetest accents.

"You are very good, my love, to think so; but nobody can live in that odious country without being infected with its *patois*. I really thought I should have caught it myself; and Mr Douglas (no longer Henry) became quite gross in his language, after living amongst his relations."

"This is really too bad," cried Lady Emily, indignantly. "If a person speaks sense and truth, what does it signify in what accent they are spoken? And whether your ladyship chooses to receive your daughter here or not, I shall, at any rate, invite my cousin to my father's house." And, snatching up a pen, she instantly began a letter to Mary.

Lady Juliana was highly incensed at this freedom of her niece; but she was a little afraid of her, and therefore, after some sharp altercation, and with infinite violence done to her feelings, she was prevailed upon to write a decently civil sort of a letter to Mrs Douglas, consenting to receive her daughter for a *few months*; firmly resolving in her own mind to conceal her from all eyes and ears while she remained, and to return her to her Scotch relations early in the summer.

This worthy resolution formed, she became more serene, and awaited the arrival of her daughter with as much firmness as could reasonably have been expected.

Little weened the good ladies of Glenfern the ungracious reception their *protégé* was likely to experience from her mother; for, in spite of the defects of her education, Mary was a general favourite in the family; and, however they might solace themselves by depreciating her to Mrs Douglas, to the world in general, and their young female acquaintances in particular, she was upheld as an epitome of every perfection above and below the sun. Had it been possible for them to conceive that Mary could have been received with anything short of rapture, Lady Juliana's letter might, in some measure, have opened the eyes of their understanding; but to the guileless sisters it seemed everything that was proper. Sorry for the necessity Mrs Douglas felt of parting with her adopted daughter—was “prettily expressed;” had no doubt it was merely a slight nervous affection—“was kind and soothing;” and the assurance, more than once repeated, that her friends might rely upon her being returned to them in the course of a very few months, “showed a great deal of feeling and consideration.” But as their minds never maintained a just equilibrium long upon any subject, but, like falsely-adjusted scales, were ever hovering and vibrating at either extreme—so they could not rest satisfied in the belief that Mary was to be happy—there must be something to counteract that stilling sentiment; and that was the apprehension that Mary would be spoilt. This, for the present, was the pendulum of their imaginations.

“I declare, Mary, my sisters and I could get no sleep last night for thinking of you,” said Miss Grizzy; “we are all certain that Lady Juliana especially, but indeed all your English relations, will think so much of you—from not knowing you, you know—which will be

quite natural, that my sisters and I have taken it into our heads—but I hope it won't be the case, as you have a great deal of good sense of your own—that they will quite turn your head."

"Mary's head is on her shoulders to little purpose," followed up Miss Jacky, "if she can't stand being made of when she goes amongst strangers; and she ought to know by this time, that a mother's partiality is no proof of a child's merit."

"You hear that, Mary," rejoined Miss Grizzy: "so I'm sure I hope you won't mind a word what your mother says to you,—I mean about yourself; for, of course, you know, she can't be such a good judge of you as us, who have known you all your life. As to other things, I dare say she is very well informed about the country, and politics, and these sort of things—I'm certain Lady Juliana knows a great deal."

"And I hope, Mary, you will take care and not get into the daadlin' handless ways of the English women," said Miss Nicky; "I wouldn't give a pin for an English woman."

"And I hope you will never look at an Englishman, Mary," said Miss Grizzy, with equal earnestness; "take my word for it, they are a very dissipated unprincipled set of young men—so you may think what it would be for all of us if you was to marry any of them." And tears streamed from the good spinster's eyes, at the bare supposition of such a calamity.

"Don't be afraid, my dear aunt," said Mary, with a kind caress; "I shall come back to you your own 'Highland Mary.' No Englishman, with his round face and trim meadows, shall ever captivate me. Heath-covered hills, and high cheek-bones, are the charms that must win my heart."

"I'm delighted to hear you say so, my dear Mary," said the literal-minded Grizzy. "Certainly nothing can

be prettier than the heather when it's in flower ; and there is something very manly—nobody can dispute that—in high cheek-bones : and besides, to tell you a secret, Lady MacLaughlan has a husband in her eye for you ;—we, none of us, can conceive who it is, but, of course, he must be suitable in every respect ; for you know Lady MacLaughlan has had two husbands herself, so, of course, she must be an excellent judge of a good husband.”

“ Or a bad one,” said Mary, “ which is the same thing. Warning is as good as example.”

Mrs Douglas's ideas and those of her aunts did not coincide upon this occasion more than upon most others. In her sister-in-law's letter she flattered herself she saw only fashionable indifference ; and she fondly hoped that would soon give way to a tenderer sentiment, as her daughter became known to her. At any rate, it was proper that Mary should make the trial, and, whichever way it ended, it must be for her advantage.

“ Mary has already lived too long in these mountain solitudes,” thought she ; “ her ideas will become romantic, and her taste fastidious. If it is dangerous to be too early initiated into the ways of the world, it is perhaps equally so to live too long secluded from it. Should she win herself a place in the heart of her mother and sister, it will be so much happiness gained ; and should it prove otherwise, it will be a lesson learnt—a hard one, indeed ! but hard are the lessons we must all learn in the school of life ! ” Yet Mrs Douglas's fortitude almost failed her as the period of separation approached.

It had been arranged by Lady Emily that a carriage and servants should meet Mary at Edinburgh, whither Mr Douglas was to convey her. The cruel moment came ; and mother, sister, relations, friends, all the bright visions which Mary's sanguine spirit had conjured up to soften the parting pang, all were absorbed in one

agonising feeling—one overwhelming thought. Oh! who that, for the first time, has parted from the parent whose tenderness and love were entwined with our earliest recollections, whose sympathy had soothed our infant sufferings, whose fondness had brightened our infant felicity;—who, that has a heart, but must have felt it sink beneath the anguish of a first farewell! Yet bitterer still must be the feelings of the parent upon committing the cherished object of her cares and affections to the stormy ocean of life. When experience points to the gathering cloud and rising surge which may soon assail her defenceless child, what can support the mother's heart but trust in Him whose eye slumbereth not, and whose power extendeth over all! It was this pious hope, this holy confidence, that enabled this more than mother to part from her adopted child with a resignation which no earthly motive could have imparted to her mind.

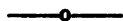
It seems almost profanation to mingle with her elevated feelings the coarse, yet simple, sorrows of the aunts, old and young, as they clung around the nearly lifeless Mary, each tendering the parting gift they had kept as a solace for the last.

Poor Miss Grizzy was more than usually incoherent, as she displayed “a nice new umbrella, that could be turned into a nice walking-stick, or any thing;” and “a dressing-box, with a little of every thing in it;” and, with a fresh burst of tears, Mary was directed where she would *not* find eye-ointment, and where she was *not* to look for court-plaster.

Miss Jacky was more composed, as she presented a flaming copy of “Fordyce's Sermons to Young Women,” with a few suitable observations; but Miss Nicky could scarcely find voice to tell, that the housewife she now tendered had once been Lady Girnachgowl's, and that it contained Whitechapel needles of every size and

number. The younger ladies had clubbed for the purchase of a large locket, in which was enshrined a lock from each subscriber, tastefully arranged by the — jeweller, in the form of a wheataheaf, upon a blue ground. Even old Donald had his offering, and, as he stood tottering at the chaise-door, he contrived to get a “bit sniahin mull” laid on Mary’s lap, with a “Bless her bonny face, an’ may she ne’er want a good sneesh!”

The carriage drove off, and for a while Mary’s eyes were closed in anguish.



Chapter xxix.

Farewell to the mountains, high cover’d with snow;
Farewell to the straths, and green valleys below;
Farewell to the forests, and wild hanging woods;
Farewell to the torrents, and loud roaring floods!

Scotch Song.

HAPPILY in the moral world, as in the material one, the warring elements have their prescribed bounds, and “the flood of grief decreaseth when it can swell no higher;” but it is only by retrospection we can bring ourselves to believe in this obvious truth. The young and untried heart hugs itself in the bitterness of its emotions, and takes a pride in believing that its anguish can end but with its existence; and it is not till time hath almost steeped our senses in forgetfulness, that we discover the mutability of all human passions.

But Mary left it not to the slow hand of time to subdue in some measure the grief that swelled her heart. Had she given way to selfishness, she would have sought the free indulgence of her sorrow as the only mitigation of it; but she felt also for her uncle. He was depressed

at parting with his wife and child, and he was taking a long and dreary journey entirely upon her account. Could she therefore be so selfish as to add to his uneasiness by a display of her sufferings? No—she would strive to conceal it from his observation, though to overcome it was impossible. Her feelings must ever remain the same, but she would confine them to her own breast; and she began to converse with, and even strove to amuse, her kind-hearted companion. Ever and anon, indeed, a rush of tender recollections came across her mind, and the soft voice and the bland countenance of her maternal friend seemed for a moment present to her senses; and then the dreariness and desolation that succeeded as the delusion vanished, and all was stillness and vacuity! Even self-reproach shot its piercing sting into her ingenuous heart: levities, on which, in her usual gaiety of spirit, she had never bestowed a thought, now appeared to her as crimes of the deepest dye. She thought how often she had slighted the counsels and neglected the wishes of her gentle mistress; how she had wearied of her good old aunts, their cracked voices, the drowsy hum of their spinning wheels, the rasping sound of their shaping-scissors, and the everlasting *tic-a-tic* of their knitting-needles; how coarse and vulgar she had sometimes deemed the younger ones; how she had mimicked Lady MacLaughlan, and caricatured Sir Sampson; and “even poor dear old Donald,” said she, as she summed up the catalogue of her crimes, “could not escape my insolence and ill-nature. How clever I thought it to sing ‘Haud awa frae me, Donald,’ and how affectedly I shuddered at everything he touched!”—and the “sneeshin mull” was bedewed with tears of affectionate contrition. But every painful sentiment was for a while suspended in admiration of the magnificent scenery that was spread around them. Though summer had fled,

and few even of autumn's graces remained, yet over the august features of mountain scenery the seasons have little control. Their charms depend not upon richness of verdure, or luxuriance of foliage, or any of the mere prettinesses of nature; but, whether wrapped in snow, or veiled in mist, or glowing in sunshine, their lonely grandeur remains the same; and the same feelings fill and elevate the soul in contemplating these mighty works of an Almighty hand.

O Nature! all thy seasons please the eye
Of him who sees a Deity in all.

The eye is never weary of watching the thousand varieties of light and shade, as they flit over the mountain, or gleam upon the water; while the ear is satisfied with the majestic silence of solitude, or charmed with the "wild roarings of nature," as heard in the hollow murmur of the wind, or the hoarse gurgling of innumerable mountain-streams.

Others besides Mary seemed to have taken a fanciful pleasure in combining the ideas of the mental and elemental world; for, in the dreary dwelling where they were destined to pass the night, she found inscribed the following lines:—

"The busy winds war 'mid the waving boughs,
And darkly rolls the heaving surge to land;
Among the flying clouds the moon-beam glows
With colours foreign to its softness bland.

"Here, one dark shadow melts, in gloom profound,
The towering Alps—the guardians of the Lake;
There, one bright gleam sheds silver light around,
And shows the threat'ning strife that tempests wake.

"Thus o'er my mind a busy memory plays,
That shakes the feelings to their inmost core;
Thus beams the light of Hope's fallacious rays,
When simple confidence can trust no more.

"So one dark shadow shrouds each by-gone hour,
 So one bright gleam the coming tempest shows;
That tells of sorrows, which, though past, still lower,
 And *this* reveals th' approach of future woes. C."

While Mary was trying to decipher these somewhat mystic lines, her uncle was carrying on a colloquy in Gaelic with their hostess. The consequences of the consultation were not of the choicest description, consisting of braxy * mutton, raw potatoes, wet bannocks, hard cheese, and whisky. Very differently would the travellers have fared, had the good Nicky's intentions been fulfilled. She had prepared with her own hands a moorfowl-pie and potted nowt's-head, besides a profusion of what she termed "trifles, just for Mary, poor thing! to divert herself with upon the road." But, alas! in the anguish of separation the covered basket had been forgot, and the labour of Miss Nicky's hands fell to be consumed by the family, though Miss Grizzy protested, with tears in her eyes, "that it went to her heart like a knife, to eat poor Mary's puffs and snaps."

Change of air and variety of scene failed not to produce the happiest effects upon Mary's languid frame and drooping spirits. Her cheek already glowed with health, and was sometimes dimpled with smiles. She still wept, indeed, as she thought of those she had left; but often while the tear trembled in her eye its course was arrested by wonder, or admiration, or delight,—for every object had its charms for her. Her cultivated taste and thoughtful mind could descry beauty in the form of a hill, and grandeur in the foam of the wave, and elegance in the weeping birch as it dipped its now almost leafless boughs in the mountain stream. These simple pleasures, unknown alike to the sordid mind and vitiated taste, are ever exquisitely enjoyed by

— one whose heart the holy forms
 Of young Imagination have kept pure.

* Sheep that have died a natural death, and been salted.

Chapter xxxij.

Her native sense improved by reading,
Her native sweetness by good breeding.

DURING their progress through the Highlands, the travellers were hospitably entertained at the mansions of the country gentlemen, where old-fashioned courtesy and modern comfort combined to cheer the stranger-guest. But upon *coming out*, as it is significantly expressed by the natives of these mountain regions, viz., entering the low country, they found they had only made a change of difficulties. In the Highlands they were always sure, that wherever there was a house, that house would be to them a home; but on a fair day in the little town of G—— they found themselves in the midst of houses, and surrounded by people, yet unable to procure rest or shelter.

At the only inn the place afforded, they were informed the horses were all out, and the house quite full; while the driver asserted, what indeed was apparent, "that his beasts warn a fit to gang the length o' their foot farther—no for the king himsel'."

At this moment, a stout, florid, good-humoured-looking man passed, whistling "*Roy's Wife*" with all his heart; and, just as Mr Douglas was stepping out of the carriage to try what could be done, the same person, evidently attracted by curiosity, repassed, changing his tune to "*There's cauld kail in Aberdeen.*"

He started at sight of Mr Douglas; then eagerly grasping his hand, "Ah! Archie Douglas, is this you?" exclaimed he, with a loud laugh, and hearty shake. "What! you haven't forgot your old school-fellow, Bob Gawffaw?"

A mutual recognition now took place, and much pleasure was manifested on both sides at this unexpected

rencontre. No time was allowed to explain their embarrassments, for Mr Gawffaw had already tipped the post-boy the wink (which he seemed easily to comprehend); and, forcing Mr Douglas to resume his seat in the carriage, he jumped in himself.

"Now for Howffend, and Mrs Gawffaw! ha, ha, ha! This will be a surprise upon her. She thinks I'm in my barn all this time—ha, ha, ha!"

Mr Douglas here began to express his astonishment at his friend's precipitation, and his apprehensions as to the trouble they might occasion Mrs Gawffaw; but bursts of laughter and broken expressions of delight were the only replies he could procure from his friend.

After jolting over half a mile of very bad road, the carriage stopped at a mean vulgar-looking mansion, with dirty windows, ruinous thatched offices, and broken fences.

Such was the picture of still life. That of animated nature was not less picturesque. Cows bellowed, and cart-horses neighed, and pigs grunted, and geese gabbled, and ducks quacked, and cocks and hens flapped and fluttered promiscuously, as they mingled, in a sort of yard, divided from the house by a low dike, possessing the accommodation of a crazy gate, which was bestrode by a parcel of bare-legged boys.

"What are you about, you lazy rascals!" called Mr Gawffaw to them.

"Naething," answered one.

"We're just takin' a heize on the yett," answered another.

"I'll heize ye, ye scoundrels!" exclaimed the incensed Mr Gawffaw, as he burst from the carriage; and, snatching the driver's whip from his hand, flew after the more nimble-footed culprits.

Finding his efforts to overtake them in vain, he returned to the door of his mansion, where stood his

guests, waiting to be ushered in. He opened the door himself, and led the way to a parlour, which was quite of a piece with the exterior of the dwelling. A dim dusty table stood in the middle of the floor, heaped with a variety of heterogeneous articles of dress, and an exceeding dirty volume of a novel lay open amongst them. The floor was littered with shapings of flannel, and shreds of gauzes, ribands, &c. The fire was almost out, and the hearth was covered with ashes.

After insisting upon his guests being seated, Mr Gawffaw walked to the door of the apartment, and halloed out, "Mrs Gawffaw—ho! May, my dear! —I say, Mrs Gawffaw!"

A low, croaking, querulous voice was now heard in reply,—“For any sake, Mr Gawffaw, make less noise! have mercy on the walls of your house, if you’ve none on my poor head!” And thereupon entered Mrs Gawffaw, a cap in one hand, which she appeared to have been trying on—a smelling-bottle in the other.

She possessed a considerable share of insipid, and somewhat faded, beauty, but disguised by a tawdry trumpery style of dress, and rendered almost disgusting by the air of affectation, folly, and peevishness, that overspread her whole person and deportment. She testified the utmost surprise and coldness at sight of her guests; and, as she entered, Mr Gawffaw rushed out, having descried something passing in the yard that called for his interposition. Mr Douglas was therefore under the necessity of introducing himself and Mary to their ungracious hostess; briefly stating the circumstances that had led them to be her guests, and dwelling, with much warmth, on the kindness and hospitality of her husband in having relieved them from their embarrassment. A gracious smile, or what was intended as such, beamed over Mrs Gawffaw’s face at first mention of their names.

"Excuse me, Mr Douglas," said she, making a profound reverence to him, and another to Mary, while she waved her hand for them to be seated. "Excuse me, Miss Douglas; but, situated as I am, I find it necessary to be very distant to Mr Gawffaw's friends sometimes. He is a thoughtless man, Mr Douglas; a very thoughtless man. He makes a perfect inn of his house. He never lies out of the town, trying who he can pick up and bring home with him. It is seldom I am so fortunate as to see such guests as Mr and Miss Douglas of Glenfern Castle in my house,"—with an elegant bow to each, which, of course, was duly returned. "But Mr Gawffaw would have shown more consideration, both for you and me, had he apprised me of the honour of your visit, instead of bringing you here in this ill-bred, unceremonious manner. As for me, I am too well accustomed to him to be hurt at these things now. He has kept me in hot water, I may say, since the day I married him!"

In spite of the conciliatory manner in which this agreeable address was made, Mr Douglas felt considerably disconcerted, and again renewed his apologies, adding something about hopes of being able to proceed.

"Make no apologies, my dear sir," said the lady, with what she deemed a most bewitching manner; "it affords me the greatest pleasure to see any of your family under my roof. I meant no reflection on you; it is entirely Mr Gawffaw that is to blame, in not having apprised me of the honour of this visit, that I might not have been caught in this *désabille*; but I was really so engaged by my studies," pointing to the dirty novel, "that I was quite unconscious of the lapse of time." The guests felt more and more at a loss what to say. But the lady was at none. Seeing Mr Douglas still standing with his hat in his hand, and

his eye directed towards the door, she resumed her discourse :

"Pray be seated, Mr Douglas—I beg you will sit off the door. Miss Douglas, I entreat you will walk in to the fire—I hope you will consider yourself as quite at home"—another elegant bend to each. "I only regret that Mr Gawffaw's folly and ill-breeding should have brought you into this disagreeable situation, Mr Douglas. He is a well-meaning man, Mr Douglas, and a good-hearted man ; but he is very deficient in other respects, Mr Douglas."

Mr Douglas, happy to find any thing to which he could assent, warmly joined in the eulogium on the excellence of his friend's heart. It did not appear, however, to give the satisfaction he expected. The lady resumed with a sigh,—*"Nobody can know Mr Gawffaw's heart better than I do, Mr Douglas. It is a good one, but it is far from being an elegant one ; it is one in which I find no congeniality of sentiment with my own. Indeed, Mr Gawffaw is no companion for me, nor I for him, Mr Douglas—he is never happy in my society ; and I really believe he would rather sit down with the tinklers on the road-side, than spend a day in my company."*

A deep sigh followed ; but its pathos was drowned in the obstreperous *"ha, ha, ha !"* of her joyous help-mate, as he bounced into the room, wiping his forehead :

"Why, May, my dear, what have you been about to-day ? Things have been all going to the deuce. Why didn't you hinder these boys from sweein' the gate off its hinges, and "*——*

"Me hinder boys from sweein' gates, Mr Gawffaw ! Do I look like as if I was capable of hindering boys from sweein' gates, Miss Douglas ? "

"Well, my dear, you ought to look after your pigs a

little better. That jade, black Jess, has trod a parcel of them to death, ha, ha, ha! and "——"

"Me look after pigs, Mr Gawffaw! I'm really astonished at you!" again interrupted the lady, turning pale with vexation. Then, with an affected giggle, appealing to Mary,—“I leave you to judge, Miss Douglas, if I look like a person made for running after pigs!”

"Indeed," thought Mary, "you don't look like as if you could do anything half so useful."

"Well, never mind the pigs, my dear; only don't give us any of them for dinner—ha, ha, ha!—and, May, when will you let us have it?"

"Me let you have it, Mr Gawffaw! I'm sure I don't hinder you from having it when you please, only you know I prefer late hours myself. I was always accustomed to them in my poor father's life-time—he never dined before four o'clock; and I seldom knew what it was to be in my bed before twelve o'clock at night, Miss Douglas, till I married Mr Gawffaw."

Mary tried to look sorrowful, to hide the smile that was dimpling her cheek.

"Come, let us have something to eat in the meantime, my dear."

"I'm sure you may eat the house, if you please, for me, Mr Gawffaw! What would you take, Miss Douglas? Pull the bell,—softly, Mr Gawffaw! you do every thing so violently."

A dirty maid-servant, with bare feet, answered the summons.

"Where's Tom?" demanded the lady, well knowing that Tom was afar off at some of the farm operations.

"I ken na whar he's. He'll be aether at the patatees, or the horses, I'ae warran. Div ye want him?"

"Bring some glasses," said her mistress, with an air of great dignity. "Mr Gawffaw, you must see about the wine yourself, since you have sent Tom out of the way."

Mr Gawffaw and his handmaid were soon heard in an adjoining closet; the one wondering where the screw was, the other vociferating for a knife to cut the bread; while the mistress of this well-regulated mansion sought to divert her guests' attention from what was passing, by entertaining them with complaints of Mr Gawffaw's noise, and her maid's insolence, till the parties appeared to speak for themselves.

After being refreshed with some very sour wine and stale bread, the gentlemen set off on a survey of the farm, and the ladies repaired to their toilettes. Mary's simple dress was quickly adjusted; and, upon descending, she found her uncle alone in what Mrs Gawffaw had shown to her as the drawing-room. He guessed her curiosity to know something of her hosts; and therefore briefly informed her that Mrs Gawffaw was the daughter of a trader in some manufacturing town, who had lived in opulence, and died insolvent. During his life, his daughter had eloped with Bob Gawffaw, then a gay lieutenant in a marching regiment, who had been esteemed a very lucky fellow in getting the pretty Miss Croaker, with the prospect of ten thousand pounds. None thought more highly of her husband's good fortune than the lady herself; and though *her* fortune never was realised, she gave herself all the airs of having been the making of his. At this time, Mr Gawffaw was a reduced lieutenant, living upon a small paternal property, which he pretended to farm; but the habits of a military life, joined to a naturally social disposition, were rather inimical to the pursuits of agriculture, and most of his time was spent in loitering about the village of G—, where he generally contrived, either to pick up a guest or procure a dinner.

Mrs Gawffaw despised her husband—had weak nerves and headaches—was above managing her house—read novels—died ribands—and altered her gowns according to every pattern she could see or hear of.

Such were Mr and Mrs Gawffaw ; one of the many ill-assorted couples in this world—joined, not matched. A sensible man would have curbed her folly and peevishness : a good-tempered woman would have made his home comfortable, and rendered him more domestic.

The dinner was such as might have been expected from the previous specimens—bad of its kind, cold, ill-dressed, and slovenly set down ; but Mrs Gawffaw seemed satisfied with herself and it.

“This is very fine mutton, Mr Douglas, and not under-done to most people’s tastes—and this fowl, I have no doubt, will eat well, Miss Douglas, though it is not so white as some I have seen.”

“The fowl, my dear, looks as if it had been the great-grandmother of this sheep—ha, ha, ha !”

“For any sake, Mr Gawffaw, make less noise, or my head will split in a thousand pieces !” putting her hands to it, as if to hold the frail tenement together. This was always her refuge when at a loss for a reply.

A very ill-concocted pudding next called forth her approbation.

“This pudding should be good ; for it is the same I used to be so partial to in my poor father’s life-time ! when I was used to every delicacy, Miss Douglas, that money could purchase.”

“But you thought me the greatest delicacy of all, my dear, ha, ha, ha ! for you left all your other delicacies for me, ha, ha, ha !—what do you say to that, May ?—ha, ha, ha !”

May’s reply consisted in putting her hands to her head, with an air of inexpressible vexation ; and, finding all her endeavours to be elegant frustrated by the

overpowering vulgarity of her husband, she remained silent during the remainder of the repast ; solacing herself with complacent glances at her yellow silk gown, and adjusting the gold chains and necklaces that adorned her bosom.

Poor Mary was doomed to a *tête-à-tête* with her during the whole evening ; for Mr Gawffaw was too happy *with* his friend, and *without* his wife, to quit the dining-room till a late hour ; and then he was so much exhilarated, that she could almost have joined Mrs Gawffaw in her exclamation of " For any sake, Mr Gawffaw, have mercy on my head ! "

The night, however, like all other nights, had a close ; and Mrs Gawffaw, having once more enjoyed the felicity of finding herself in company at twelve o'clock at night, at length withdrew ; and having apologised, and hoped, and feared, for another hour in Mary's apartment, she finally left her to the blessings of solitude and repose.

As Mr Douglas was desirous of reaching Edinburgh the following day, he had, in spite of the urgent remonstrances of his friendly host, and the elegant importunities of his lady, ordered the carriage at an early hour ; and Mary was too eager to quit Howffend to keep it waiting. Mr Gawffaw was in readiness to hand her in, but fortunately Mrs Gawffaw's head did not permit of her rising. With much the same hearty laugh that had welcomed their meeting, honest Gawffaw now saluted the departure of his friend ; and, as he leant whistling over his gate, he ruminated sweet and bitter thoughts as to the destinies of the day—whether he should solace himself with a good dinner, and the company of Bailie Merrythought, at the Cross-Keys in G——, or put up with cold mutton, and May, at home.

Chapter xxxiv.

Edina ! Scotia's darling seat !
All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
Where once, beneath a monarch's feet,
Sat Legislation's sov'reign pow'rs !

BURNS.

THE travellers had viewed with interest the memorable localities of Stirling Castle, and looked with delight from its rocky ramparts on the magnificent panorama which lay stretched around. They now stood amidst the mouldering walls of Linlithgow palace, as the setting sun gilded them with its last rays, and shed its mellow radiance over the green bank on which they stand. *That* is now crumbling into mere masses of mossy herbage ; yet there may still be traced those terraced gardens where once flourished England's proud rose and France's fair *fleur-de-lis*, but where Scotland's wild blue-bell now hangs its lonely head. The farewell gleam of light quivered on the stems of the aged sycamores which surmount the grassy knolls, and whose shrivelled arms and scanty foliage seem, to the fanciful eye, as though now, in their old age, stretched forth to guard the kingly walls which had once sheltered their green heads from the storm. The tranquil waters of the fair Loch lay in deep-blue shadow beneath. It was a scene to be remembered, and Mary felt the impressiveness of the contrast, as she turned from the enduring loveliness of nature to retrace her steps through the gloom and vacuity of the roofless towers and desolate halls of this, once the fairest "beyond compare" of Scotland's pleasant palaces.

But the young enthusiast's feelings were still more vividly excited on entering the Scottish metropolis. An inhabitant of London or Paris would smile to hear

Edinburgh styled a great city ; but, to one born and bred amid nature's solitudes, its size seemed vast, its buildings noble, its beauty (as in truth it is) surpassing. But beyond all these were the historic and romantic associations which crowded upon her mind, and to which youth and imagination love to give "a local habitation and a name;" and visions of olden time seemed to start into life, with all their picturesque pageantry.

"And this was once a gay court!" thought she, as they traversed the dull arcades of its deserted palace, and listened to the dreary sounds of the sentinel's footsteps. "How changed since that bright epoch when here shone the

Star of the Stuart line—accomplish'd James!

And here, where all is now so sad and still, were once

The banquet and the song;
By day the tourney, and by night
The merry dance trac'd fast and light,
The masquers quaint, the pageant bright,
The revel loud and long!

And on this very spot on which I now stand once stood the hapless Mary Stuart, in all her bright and queenly beauty! *Her* eye beheld the same objects on which mine now rests; *her* hand has touched the draperies which I now hold in mine:—these frail memorials remain; but what, alas! remains of Scotland's queen, but blood-stained records and a blighted fame!"

Even the fatal chamber, the scene of Rizzio's murder, possessed a nameless charm for Mary's vivid imagination. She had not entirely escaped the superstitions of the country in which she had lived; and she readily yielded her assent to the asseverations of her guide, as to its being the *bonâ fide* blood of David

Rizzio, which, for nearly three hundred years, had resisted all human efforts to efface it.

"My credulity is so harmless," said she, in answer to her uncle's attempt to laugh her out of her belief, "that I surely may be permitted to indulge it—especially since, I confess, I feel a sort of indescribable pleasure in it."

"*You* take a pleasure in the sight of blood!" exclaimed Mr Douglas, in astonishment,—“you, who turn pale at sight of a cut finger, and shudder at a leg of mutton with the juice in it!”

"Oh, mere modern vulgar blood is very shocking," answered Mary, with a smile; "but observe how this is mellowed by time into a tint that could not offend the most fastidious fine lady: besides," added she, in a graver tone, "I own I love to believe in things supernatural; it seems to connect us more with another world, than when everything is seen to proceed in the mere ordinary course of nature, as it is called. I cannot bear to imagine a dreary chasm betwixt the inhabitants of this world and beings of a higher sphere; I love to fancy myself surrounded by"——

"I wish you would remember you are surrounded by rational beings, and not fall into such rhapsodies," said her uncle, glancing at a party, who stood near them, jesting upon all the objects which Mary had been regarding with so much veneration. "But, come, you have been long enough here. Let us try whether a breeze on the Calton Hill will not dispel these cobwebs from your brain."

The day, though cold, was clear and sunny; and the lovely spectacle before them shone forth in all its gay magnificence. The blue waters lay calm and motionless. The opposite shores glowed in a thousand varied tints of wood and plain, rock and mountain, cultured field, and purple moor. Beneath, the old town reared its dark

brow, and the new one stretched its golden lines ; while, all around, the varied charms of nature lay scattered in that profusion which nature's hand alone can bestow.

"Oh ! this is exquisite !" exclaimed Mary, after a long pause, in which she had been riveted in admiration of the scene before her. "And you are in the right, my dear uncle. The ideas which are inspired by the contemplation of such a spectacle as this, are far—oh, how far !—superior to those excited by the mere works of art. There, I can, at best, think but of the inferior agents of Providence : here, the soul rises from nature up to nature's God."

"You will certainly be taken for a Methodist, Mary, if you talk in this manner," said Mr Douglas, with some marks of disquiet, as he turned round at the salutation of a fat elderly gentleman, whom he presently recognised as Bailie Broadfoot.

The first salutations over, Mr Douglas's fears of Mary having been overheard recurred, and he felt anxious to remove any unfavourable impression with regard to his own principles, at least, from the mind of the enlightened magistrate.

"Your fine views here have set my niece absolutely raving," said he with a smile ; "but I tell her it is only in romantic minds that fine scenery inspires romantic ideas. I dare say many of the worthy inhabitants of Edinburgh walk here with no other idea than that of sharpening their appetites for dinner."

"Nae doot," said the bailie, "it's a most capital place for that. Were it no' for that, I ken nae muckle use it would be of."

"You speak from experience of its virtues in that respect, I suppose ?" said Mr Douglas, gravely.

"'Deed as to that, I canna compleen. At times, to be sure, I am troubled with a little kind of squeamishness after our public interteenments : but three rounds

o' the hill; sets a' to richta." Then observing Mary's eyes exploring, as he supposed, the town of Leith, "You see that prospeck to nae advantage the day, miss," said he. "If the glass-houses had been workin', it would have looked as weel again. Ye hae nae glass-houses in the Highlands; na, na."

The bailie had a share in the concern; and the volcanic clouds of smoke that issued from thence were far more interesting subjects of speculation to him than all the eruptions of Vesuvius or Etna. But there was nothing to charm the lingering view to-day; and he therefore proposed their taking a look at Bridewell, which, next to the smoke from the glass-houses, he reckoned the object most worthy of notice. It was, indeed, deserving of the praises bestowed upon it; and Mary was giving her whole attention to the details of it, when she was suddenly startled by hearing her own name wailed in piteous accents from one of the lower cells, and, upon turning round, she discovered in the prisoner the son of one of the tenants of Glenfern. Duncan McFree had been always looked upon as a very honest lad in the Highlands, but he had left home to push his fortune as a pedlar; and the temptations of the low country having proved too much for his virtue, poor Duncan was now expiating his offence in durance vile.

"I shall have a pretty account of you to carry to Glenfern," said Mr Douglas, regarding the culprit with his sternest look.

"O, 'deed, sir, it's no' my fau't!" answered Duncan, blubbering bitterly; "but there's nae freedom at a' in this country. Och, an' I were oot o't! Ane canna ca' their head their ain in't; for ye canna lift the bouk o' a prin, but they're a' upon ye." And a fresh burst of sorrow ensued.

Finding the *peccadillo* was of a venial nature, Mr

Douglas besought the bailie to use his interest to procure the enfranchisement of this his vassal, which Mr Broadfoot, happy to oblige a customer, promised should be obtained on the following day ; and Duncan's emotions being rather clamorous, the party found it necessary to withdraw.

"And noo," said the bailie, as they emerged from this place of dole and durance, "will ye step up to the Monument, and tak a rest and some refreshment?"

"Rest and refreshment in a monument!" exclaimed Mr Douglas. "Excuse me, my good friend, but we are not inclined to bait there yet a while."

The bailie did not comprehend the joke, and he proceeded in his own drawing humdrum accent to assure them that the Monument was a most convenient place.

"It was erected in honour of Lord Nelson's memory," said he, "and is let to a pastry-cook and confectioner, where you can always find some trifles to treat the ladies, such as pies and custards, and berries, and these sort of things; but we passed an order in the cooncil that there should be nothing of a spiritous nature introduced, for, if once spirits got admittance, there's no' saying what might happen."

This was a fact which none of the party were disposed to dispute; and the bailie, triumphing in his dominion over the spirits, shuffled on before, to do the honours of the place, appropriated at one and the same time to the manes of a hero and the making of minced pies. The regale was admirable; and Mary could not help thinking times were improved, and that it was a better thing to eat tarts in Lord Nelson's monument, than to have been poisoned in Julius Cæsar's.

Chapter xxx.

Having a tongue rough as a cat, and biting like an adder, and all their reproofs are direct scoldings, their common intercourse is open contumely.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

"**T**HOUGH last, not least of Nature's works, I must now introduce you to a friend of mine," said Mr Douglas, as, the bailie having made his bow, they bent their steps towards the Castle Hill. "Mrs Violet Macshake is an aunt of my mother's, whom you must often have heard of, and the last remaining branch of the noble race of Girnachgowl."

"I am afraid she is rather a formidable person, then?" said Mary.

Her uncle hesitated—"No, not formidable—only rather particular, as all old people are; but she is very good-hearted."

"I understand, in other words, she is very disagreeable. All ill-tempered people, I observe, have the character of being good-hearted; or else all good-hearted people are ill-tempered,—I cannot tell which."

"It is more than reputation with her," said Mr Douglas, "for she is, in reality, a very good-hearted woman, as I experienced when a boy at college. Many a crown-piece and half-guinea I used to get from her:—many a scold, to be sure, went along with them; but that, I dare say, I deserved. Besides, she is very rich, and I am her reputed heir; therefore, gratitude and self-interest combine to render her extremely amiable in my estimation."

They had now reached the airy dwelling where Mrs Macshake resided, and having rung, the door was at length most deliberately opened by an ancient, sour-visaged, long-waisted female, who ushered them into an

apartment, the *coup d'œil* of which struck a chill to Mary's heart. It was a good-sized room, with a bare sufficiency of small-legged dining-tables, and lank hair-cloth chairs, ranged in high order round the walls. Although the season was advanced, and the air piercing cold, the grate stood smiling in all the charms of polished steel; and the mistress of the mansion was seated by the side of it in an arm-chair, still in its summer position. She appeared to have no other occupation than what her own meditations afforded; for a single glance sufficed to show, that not a vestige of book or work was harboured there. She was a tall large-boned woman, whom even Time's iron hand had scarcely bent, as she merely stooped at the shoulders. She had a drooping snuffy nose—a long turned-up chin—small quick grey eyes; and her face projected far beyond her figure, with an expression of shrewd restless curiosity. She wore a mode (not *à-la-mode*) bonnet, and cardinal of the same; a pair of clogs over her shoes, and black silk mittens on her arms.

As soon as she recognised Mr Douglas, she welcomed him with much cordiality, shook him long and heartily by the hand—patted him on the back—looked into his face with much seeming satisfaction; and, in short, gave all the demonstrations of gladness usual with gentlewomen of a certain age. Her pleasure, however, appeared to be rather an *impromptu* than an habitual feeling; for, as the surprise wore off, her visage resumed its harsh and sarcastic expression, and she seemed eager to efface any agreeable impression her reception might have excited.

"An' wha thought o' seein' you?" said she, in a quick gabbling voice; "what's brought you to the toon? Are ye come to spend your honest faither's siller, ere he's weel cauld in his grave, poor man?"

Mr Douglas explained, that it was upon account of his niece's health.

"Health!" repeated she, with a sardonic smile, "it wad mak an ool laugh to hear the wark that's made aboot young fowk's health noo-a-days. I wonder what ye're aw made o'," grasping Mary's arm in her great bony hand—"a when puir, feckless windlestrae—ye maun awa to Ingland for your healths.—Set ye up! I wunder what cam o' the lasses i' my time, that but to bide at hame? And whilk o' ye will e'er live to see ninety-sax, like me?—Health! he, he!"

Mary, glad of a pretence to indulge the mirth the old lady's manner and appearance had excited, joined most heartily in the laugh.

"Tak aff your bannet, bairn, an' let me see your face; wha can tell what like ye are, wi' that snule o' a thing on your head?" Then, after taking an accurate survey of her face, she pushed aside her pelisse—"Weel, it's a mercy, I see you hae neither the red head nor the muckle feet o' the Douglasses. I kenna whether your father has them or no. I ne'er set een on him: neither him nor his braw leddy thought it worth their while to ask after me; but I was at nae loss, by aw accounts."

"You have not asked after any of your Glenfern friends," said Mr Douglas, hoping to touch a more sympathetic chord.

"Time enough—will ye let me draw my breath, man?—fowk canna say awthing at ance. An' ye but to hae an Inglish wife too, a Scotch lass wadna serve ye. An' your wean, I'ae warran', it's ane o' the world's wonders—it's been unca lang o' cummin'—he, he!"

"He has begun life under very melancholy auspices, poor fellow!" said Mr Douglas, in allusion to his father's death.

"An' wha's faut was that?—I ne'er heard tell the like o't, to hae the bairn kirsened an' its grandfather deen'!—But fowk are neither born, nor kirsened,

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nor do they wad or dee as they used to do—awthing's changed."

"You must, indeed, have witnessed many changes," observed Mr Douglas, rather at a loss how to utter any thing of a conciliatory nature.

"Changes!—weel a wat, I sometimes wunder if it's the same waurld, an' if it's my ain head that's upon my shoothera."

"But with these changes you must also have seen many improvements?" said Mary, in a tone of diffidence.

"Improvements!" turning sharply round upon her, "what ken ye about improvements, bairn? A bonny improvement, or else no, to see tyleyors and sclaters leavin', whar I mind dukes an' yearls! An' that great glowrin' new toon there," pointing out of her windows, "whar I used to sit an' look out at bonny green parks, and see the cows milket, and the bits o' bairnies rowin' an' tummlin', an' the lasses trampin' in their tube—what see I noo, but stane an' lime, an' stoor an' dirt, an' idle cheils, an' dinket-oot madams prancin'.—Improvements, indeed!"

Mary found she was not likely to advance her uncle's fortune by the judiciousness of her remarks, therefore prudently resolved to hazard no more. Mr Douglas, who was more *au fait* to the prejudices of old age, and who was always amused with her bitter remarks when they did not touch himself, encouraged her to continue the conversation by some observation on the prevailing manners.

"Manners!" repeated she, with a contemptuous laugh, "what caw ye manners noo, for I dinna ken? ilk ane gangs bang in to their neebor's house, an' bang out o't, as it war a chynge-house; an' as for the master o't, he's no o' sae muckle value as the flunky behind his chyre. In my grandfather's time, as I hae heard him

tell, ilka master o' a faamily had his ain seat in his ain house, ay! an' sat wi' his hat on his head before the best o' the land, an' had his ain dish, an' was ay helpit first, an' keepit up his authority as a man should do. Paurents war paurents then—bairns dardna set up their gabs before them than as they do now. They ne'er presumed to say their heads war their ain i' thae days;—wife an' servants—retainers an' childer, aw trummelt i' the presence o' their head."

Here a long pinch of snuff caused a pause in the old lady's harangue; but, after having duly wiped her nose with her coloured handkerchief, and shook off all the particles that might be presumed to have lodged upon her cardinal, she resumed:—

"An' nae word o' ony o' your sisters gawn to get husbands yet? They tell me they're but coorse lasses: an' wha'll tak ill-farred, tocherless queans, where there's wealth o' bonny faces an' lang purses i' the market?—he, he!" Then resuming her scrutiny of Mary—"An' I'æ warran' ye'll be looking for an English sweet-heart too; that'll be what's takin' ye awa to Ingland."

"On the contrary," said Mr Douglas, seeing Mary was too much frightened to answer for herself—"On the contrary, Mary declares she will never marry any but a true Highlander; one who wears the dirk and plaid, and has the second-sight. And the nuptials are to be celebrated with all the pomp of feudal times; with bagpipes, and bonfires, and gatherings of clans, and roasted sheep, and barrels of whisky, and"—

"Weel a wat an she's i' the right there," interrupted Mrs Macshake, with more complacency than she had yet shown. "They may caw them what they like, but there's nae weddins now. Wha's the better o' them but innkeepers and chaise-drivers? I wudnae count mysel married i' the hiddlins way they gang about it noo."

"I dare say you remember these things done in a very different style?" said Mr Douglas.

"I dinna mind them when they war at the best; but I hae heard my mother tell what a bonny ploy was at her weddin'. I canna tell you how mony was at it; mair than the room wad haud, ye may be sure, for every relation an' friend o' baith sides war there, as weel they should; an' aw in full dress: the leddies in their hoops on, an' some o' them had sat up aw night te hae their heads drest; for they hadnae thae pocket-like taps ye hae noo," looking with contempt at Mary's Grecian contour. "An' the bride's gown was aw sewed ow'r wi' favors, frae the tap down to the tail, an' aw round the neck, an' about the aleeves; and, as soon as the ceremony was ow'r, ilk ane ran, an' rugget an' rave at her for the favors, till they hardly left the gown upon her back. Then they didnae run awa as they do now, but six an' thirty o' them sat down to a grand dinner, and there was a ball at night, an' ilka night till Sabbath cam round; an' than the bride an' the bridegroom, drest in their weddin' suits, and aw their friends in theirs wi' their favors on their breasts, walked in procession to the kirk. An' was nae that something like a weddin'? It was worth while to be married i' thae days—he, he!" *

"The wedding seems to have been admirably conducted," said Mr Douglas, with much solemnity. "The christening, I presume, would be the next distinguished event in the family."

"Troth, Archie—an' ye should keep your thumb upon christenins as lang's ye live; yours was a bonny christening or else no! I hae heard o' mony things, but a bairn christened whan its grandfather was in the dead-thraw, I ne'er heard tell o' before." Then

* These particulars were taken from the MS. reminiscences of an old lady—one of the aristocracy of her day.

observing the indignation that spread over Mr Douglas's face, she quickly resumed, "An' so you think the kirsnin' was the next ploy?—Na; the cryin was a ploy, for the leddies didnae keep themselves up than as they do now; but the day after the bairn was born, the leddy sat up in her bed, wi' her fan in her hand; an' aw her friends cam an' stood round her an' drank her health an' the bairn's. Than, at the leddy's recovery, there was a graund supper gien that they caw'd the *cummerfeals*, an' there was a great pyramid o' hens at the tap o' the table, an' anither pyramid o' ducks at the foot, an' a muckle stoup fu' o' posset i' the middle, an' aw kinds o' sweeties doon the sides; an' as soon as ilk ane had eatin' their fill, they aw flew to the sweeties, an' fought, an' strave, an' wrestled for them, leddies an' gentlemen an' aw; for the brag was, wha could pocket maist; an' whiles they wad hae the cloth aff the table, an' awthing in the middle of the floor, and the chairs upside down. Oo! muckle gude diversion, I'se warran', was at the *cummerfeals*.—Than whan they had drank the stoup dry, that ended the ploy. As for the kirsnin', that was aye whar it should be—in the house o' God, an' aw the kith an' kin by in full dress, an' a band o' maiden kimmers aw in white; an' a bonny sight it was, as I've heard my mother tell."

Mr Douglas, who was now rather tired of the old lady's reminiscences, availed himself of the opportunity of a fraesh pinch to rise and take leave.

"Oo, what's takin' ye awa, Archie, in sic a hurry? Sit doon there," laying her hand upon his arm, "an' rest ye, an' tak a glass o' wine, an' a bit bread; or may be," turning to Mary, "ye wad rather hae a drap broth to warm ye. What gars ye look sae blae, bairn? I'm sure it's no cauld; but ye're just like the rest: ye gang aw skiltin' about the streets half naked, an' than ye maun sit an' birle yersels before the fire at hame."

She had now shuffled along to the further end of the room, and, opening a press, took out wine, and a plateful of various-shaped articles of bread, which she handed to Mary.

"Hae, bairn—tak a cookie—tak it up—what are ye fear'd for!—it'll no bite ye.—Here's t'ye, Glenfern, an' your wife, an' your wean; puir thing, it's no had a very chancy ootset, weel a wat."

The wine being drunk, and the cookies discussed, Mr Douglas made another attempt to withdraw, but in vain.

"Canna ye sit still a wee, an' let me ask after my auld friends at Glenfern? How's Grizzy, an' Jacky, an' Nicky?—aye workin' awa at the drugs! I ne'er gied a bawbee for drugs aw my days, an' see if ony of them will rin a race wi' me whan they're near five score."

Mr Douglas here paid some compliments upon her appearance, which were pretty graciously received; and added that he was the bearer of a letter from his aunt Grizzy, which he would send along with a roebuck and brace of moor-game.

"If your roebuck's nae better than your last, atweel it's no worth the sendin': poor dry fissionless stuff, no worth the chewin'; weel a wat, I begrudged my teeth on't. Your muirfowl war nae that ill, but they're no worth the carryin'; they're dog-cheap i' the market now, so it's nae great compliment. If ye had brought me a leg o' gude mutton, or a cauler salmon, there would hae been some sense in't; but ye're ane o' the fowk that'll ne'er harry yoursel' wi' your presents; it's but the pickle powther they cost ye, an' I'se warran' ye're thinkin' mair o' your ain diversion than o' my stamick, whan ye're at the shootin' o' them, poor beasta."

Mr Douglas had borne the various indignities levelled against himself and his family with a philosophy that

had no parallel in his life before, but to this attack upon his game he was not proof. His colour rose, his eyes flashed fire, and something resembling an oath burst from his lips as he strode indignantly towards the door.

His friend, however, was too nimble for him. She stepped before him, and, breaking into a discordant laugh, as she patted him on the back, "So I see ye're just the auld man, Archie,—aye ready to tak' the strums, an' ye dinna get aw thing your ain way. Mony a time I had to fleech you out o' the dorts whan ye was a callant. Do ye mind how ye was affronted because I set you doon to a cauld pigeon-pie an' a tanker o' tippenny, ae night to your fowerroors, before some leddies?—he, he, he! Weel a wat, ye're wife maun hae her ain adoos to manage ye, for ye're a cumstairy chield, Archie."

Mr Douglas still looked as if he was irresolute whether to laugh or be angry.

"Come, come, sit ye doon there, till I speak to this bairn," said she, as she pulled Mary into an adjoining bed-chamber, which wore the same aspect of chilly neatness as the one they had quitted. Then, pulling a huge bunch of keys from her pocket, she opened a drawer, out of which she took a pair of diamond earrings. "Hae, bairn," said she, as she stuffed them into Mary's hand; "they belanged to your father's grandmother. She was a gude woman, an' had four-an'-twenty sons and dochters, an' I wish you nae war fortune than just to hae as mony. But mind ye," with a shake of her bony finger, "they maun a' be Scots. If I thought ye wad marry ony pock-puddin', fient haed wad ye hae gotten frae me.—Now, haud your tongue, and dinna deive me wi' thanks," almost pushing her into the parlour again; "and since ye're gaun awa' the morn, I'll see nae mair o' you—so fare ye weel. But, Archie, ye maun come an' tak your breakfast wi' me.—I have

muckle to say to you ; but ye manna be sae hard upon my baps as ye used to be," with a facetious grin to her mollified favourite, as they shook hands and parted.

"Well, how do you like Mrs Macshake, Mary?" asked her uncle, as they walked home.

"That is a cruel question, uncle," answered she, with a smile. "My gratitude and my taste are at such variance," displaying her splendid gift, "that I know not how to reconcile them."

"That is always the case with those whom Mrs Macshake has obliged," returned Mr Douglas. "She does many liberal things, but in so ungracious a manner, that people are never sure whether they are obliged or insulted by her. But the way in which she receives kindness is still worse. Could any thing equal her impertinence about my roebuck?—I have a good mind never to enter her door again!"

Mary could scarcely preserve her gravity at her uncle's indignation, which seemed so disproportioned to the cause. But, to turn the current of his ideas, she remarked, that he had certainly been at pains to select two admirable specimens of her countrywomen for her.

"I don't think I shall soon forget either Mrs Gawffaw or Mrs Macshake," said she laughing.

"I hope you won't carry away the impression, that these two *lusus nature* are specimens of Scotch women?" said her uncle. "The former, indeed, is rather a sort of weed that infests every soil—the latter, to be sure, is an indigenous plant. I question if she would have arrived at such perfection in a more cultivated field, or genial clime. She was born at a time when Scotland was very different from what it is now. Female education was little attended to, even in families of the highest rank; consequently, the ladies of those days possess a raciness (or it may be a coarseness) in their manners and ideas that we should vainly seek for in this age of culti-

vation and refinement. Had your time permitted, you could have seen much good society here, equal, perhaps, to what is to be found any where else, as far as mental cultivation is concerned. But you will have leisure for that when you return."

Mary acquiesced with a sigh. *Return* was to her still a melancholy-sounding word. It reminded her of all she had left—of the anguish of separation—the dreariness of absence; and all these painful feelings were renewed, in their utmost bitterness, when the time approached for her to bid adieu to her uncle. Lord Courtland's carriage, and two respectable-looking servants, awaited her; and the following morning she commenced her journey, in all the anguish of a heart that fondly clings to its native home.

Chapter xxxvj.

— Nor only by the warmth
And soothing sunshine of delightful things,
Do minds grow up and flourish.

AKENSIDE.

So found is worse than lost.

ADISON.

AFTER parting with the last of her beloved relatives, Mary tried to think only of the happiness that awaited her in a reunion with her mother and sister, and she gave herself up to the blissful reveries of a young and ardent imagination. Mrs Douglas had sought to repress, rather than excite, her sanguine expectations; but vainly is the experience of others employed in moderating the enthusiasm of a glowing heart. Experience *cannot* be imparted: we may render the youthful mind prematurely cautious, or meanly sus-

picious, but the experience of a pure and enlightened mind is the result of observation, matured by time.

The journey, like most modern journeys, was performed in comfort and safety; and, late one evening, Mary found herself at the goal of her wishes—at the threshold of the house that contained her mother! One idea filled her mind; but that idea called up a thousand emotions.

“I am now to meet my mother!” thought she; and, unconscious of every thing else, she was assisted from the carriage, and conducted into the house. A door was thrown open, but, shrinking from the glare of light and sound of voices that assailed her, she stood dazzled and dismayed, till she beheld a figure approaching that she guessed to be her mother. Her heart beat violently—a film was upon her eyes—she made an effort to reach her mother’s arms, and sank lifeless on her bosom!

Lady Juliana, for such it was, doubted not but that her daughter was really dead; for, though she talked of fainting every hour of the day herself, still, what is emphatically called a *dead faint*, was a spectacle no less strange than shocking to her. She was, therefore, sufficiently alarmed and overcome to behave in a very interesting manner; and some yearnings of pity even possessed her heart, as she beheld her daughter’s lifeless form extended before her—her beautiful, though inanimate, features half hid by the profusion of golden ringlets that fell around her. But these kindly feelings were of short duration; for no sooner was the nature of her daughter’s insensibility ascertained, than all her former hostility returned, as she found every one’s attention directed to Mary, and she herself entirely overlooked in the general interest she had excited; and her displeasure was still further increased, as Mary, at length slowly unclosing her eyes, stretched out her hands, and faintly articulated—“My mother!”

"Mother! What a hideous vulgar appellation!" thought the fashionable parent to herself! and, instead of answering her daughter's appeal, she hastily proposed that she should be conveyed to her own apartment: then, summoning her maid, she consigned her to her care, slightly touching her cheek as she wished her good night, and returned to the card-table. Adelaide, too, resumed her station at the harp, as if nothing had happened; but Lady Emily attended her cousin to her room—embraced her again and again, as she assured her she loved her already, she was so like her dear Edward; then, after satisfying herself that everything was comfortable, affectionately kissed her, and withdrew.

Bodily fatigue got the better of mental agitation; and Mary slept soundly, and awoke refreshed. "Can it be," thought she, as she tried to collect her bewildered thoughts, "can it be that I have really beheld my mother—that I have been pressed to her heart—that she has shed tears over me while I lay unconscious in her arms?—Mother! what a delightful sound; and how beautiful she seemed! yet I have no distinct idea of her, my head was so confused; but I have a vague recollection of something very fair, and beautiful, and seraph-like, covered with silver drapery and flowers, and with the sweetest voice in the world. Yet that must be too young for my mother—perhaps it was my sister, and my mother was too much overcome to meet her stranger-child. Oh! how happy must I be with such a mother and sister!"

In these delightful cogitations Mary remained till Lady Emily entered.

"How well you look this morning, my dear cousin!" said she, flying to her; "you are much more like my Edward than you were last night. Ah! and you have got his smile too! You must let me see that very often."

"I am sure I shall have cause," said Mary, returning her cousin's affectionate embrace, "but at present I feel anxious about my mother and sister. The agitation of our meeting, and my weakness, I fear, has been too much for them:" and she looked earnestly in Lady Emily's face for a confirmation of her fears.

"Indeed, you need be under no uneasiness on their account," returned her cousin, with her usual bluntness; "their feelings are not so easily disturbed: you will see them both at breakfast, so come along."

The room was empty; and again Mary's sensitive heart trembled for the welfare of those already so dear to her; but Lady Emily did not appear to understand the nature of her feelings.

"Have a little patience, my dear!" said she, with something of an impatient tone, as she rang for breakfast; "they will be here at their usual time. Nobody in this house is a slave to hours, or *géné* with each other's society. Liberty is the motto here: everybody breakfasts when and where they please. Lady Juliana, I believe, frequently takes hers in her dressing-room; papa never is visible till two or three o'clock; and Adelaide is always late."

"What a selfish cold-hearted thing is grandeur!" thought Mary, as Lady Emily and she sat like two specks in the splendid saloon, surrounded by all that wealth could purchase or luxury invent; and her thoughts reverted to the pious thanksgiving, and affectionate meeting, that graced their social meal in the sweet sunny breakfast-room at Lochmarlie.

Some of those airy nothings, without a local habitation, who are always to be found flitting about the mansions of the great, now lounged into the room; and soon after Adelaide made her *entrée*. Mary, trembling violently, was ready to fall upon her sister's neck; but Adelaide seemed prepared to repel every thing like a

scène; for, with a cold but sweet "I hope you are better this morning?" she seated herself at the opposite side of the table. Mary's blood rushed back to her heart—her eyes filled with tears, she knew not why, for she could not analyse the feelings that swelled in her bosom. She would have shuddered to *think* her sister unkind, but she *felt* she was so.

"It can only be the difference of our manners," sighed she to herself: "I am sure my sister loves me, though she does not show it in the same way I should have done;" and she gazed with the purest admiration and tenderness on the matchless beauty of her face and form. Never had she beheld any thing so exquisitely beautiful; and she longed to throw herself into her sister's arms, and tell her how she loved her. But Adelaide seemed to think the present company wholly unworthy of her regard; for, after having received the adulation of the gentlemen, as they severally paid her a profusion of compliments upon her appearance, "Desire Tomkins," said she, to a footman, "to ask Lady Juliana for 'The Morning Post,' and the second volume of 'Le ——,' of the French novel I am reading, and say she shall have it again when I have finished it."

"In what different terms people may express the same meaning!" thought Mary: "had I been sending a message to my mother, I should have expressed myself quite differently; but, no doubt, my sister's meaning is the same, though she may not use the same words."

The servant returned with the newspaper, and the novel would be sent when it could be found.

"Lady Juliana never reads like any body else," said her daughter; "she is for ever mislaying books. She has lost the first volumes of the two last novels that came from town, before I had even seen them."

This was uttered in the softest sweetest tone imagin-

able, and as if she had been pronouncing a panegyric. Mary was more and more puzzled.

"What can be my sister's meaning here?" thought she; "the words seem almost to imply censure, but that voice and smile speak the sweetest praise. How truly Mrs Douglas warned me never to judge of people by their words!"

At that moment the door opened, and three or four dogs rushed in, followed by Lady Juliana, with a volume of a novel in her hand. Again Mary found herself assailed by a variety of powerful emotions—she attempted to rise; but, pale and agitated, she sank back in her chair.

Her agitation was unmarked by her mother, who did not even appear to be sensible of her presence; for with a graceful bend of her head to the company in general, she approached Adelaide, and, putting her lips to her forehead, "How do you do, love? I am afraid you are very angry with me about that teasing *Le* ——. I can't conceive where it can be; but here is the third volume, which is much prettier than the second."

"I certainly shall not read the third volume before the second," said Adelaide, with her usual serenity.

"Then I shall order another copy from town, my love; or, I dare say, I could tell you the story of the second volume: it is not at all interesting, I assure you. *Hermisilde*, you know—but I forget where the first volume left off." Then directing her eyes to Mary, who had summoned strength to rise, and was slowly venturing to approach her, she extended a finger towards her. Mary eagerly seized her mother's hand, and pressed it with fervour to her lips; then hid her face on her shoulder to conceal the tears that burst from her eyes.

"Absurd, my dear!" said her ladyship in a peevish tone, as she disengaged herself from her daughter;

"you must really get the better of this foolish weakness; these *scènes* are too much for me. I was most excessively shocked last night, I assure you; and you ought not to have quitted your room to-day."

Poor Mary's tears congealed in her eyes at this tender salutation, and she raised her head as if to ascertain whether it really proceeded from her mother; but, instead of the angelic vision she had pictured to herself, she beheld a face which, though once handsome, now conveyed no pleasurable feeling to the heart.

Late hours, bad temper, and rouge, had done much to impair Lady Juliana's beauty. There still remained enough to dazzle a superficial observer, but not to satisfy the eye used to the expression of all the best affections of the soul. Mary almost shrank from the peevish inanity portrayed on her mother's visage, as a glance of the mind contrasted it with the mild benevolence of Mrs Douglas's countenance; and, abashed and disappointed, she remained mournfully silent.

"Where is Dr Redgill?" demanded Lady Juliana of the company in general.

"He has got scent of a turtle at Admiral Yellow-chops," answered Mr P.

"How provoking," rejoined her ladyship, "that he should be out of the way the only time I have wished to see him since he came to the house!"

"Who is this favoured individual, whose absence you are so pathetically lamenting, Julia?" asked Lord Courtland, as he indolently sauntered into the room.

"That disagreeable Dr Redgill. He has gone somewhere to eat turtle, at the very time I wished to consult him about"——

"The propriety of introducing a new niece to your lordship," said Lady Emily, as with affected solemnity she introduced Mary to her uncle. Lady Juliana

frowned—the earl smiled—saluted his niece—hoped she had recovered from the fatigue of the journey—remarked it was very cold, and then turned to a parrot, humming, “Pretty Polly, say,” &c.

Such was Mary’s first introduction to her family; and those only who have felt what it was to have the genial current of their souls chilled by neglect, or changed by unkindness, can sympathise in the feelings of wounded affection—when the overflowings of a generous heart are confined within the narrow limits of its own bosom, and the offerings of love are rudely rejected by the hand most dear to them.

Mary was too much intimidated by her mother’s manner towards her, to give way, in her presence, to the emotions that agitated her; but she followed her sister’s steps as she quitted the room, and, throwing her arms around her, sobbed, in a voice almost choked with the excess of her feelings, “My sister, love me!—oh! love me!” But Adelaide’s heart, seared by selfishness and vanity, was incapable of loving anything in which self had no share; and, for the first time in her life, she felt awkward and embarrassed. Her sister’s streaming eyes and supplicating voice spoke a language to which she was a stranger; for art is ever averse to recognise the accents of nature. Still less is it capable of replying to them; and Adelaide could only wonder at her sister’s agitation, and think how unpleasant it was; and say something about “overcome,” and “*cau-de-Cologne*,” and “composure;” which was all lost upon Mary as she hung upon her neck, every feeling wrought to its highest tone by the complicated nature of those emotions which swelled her heart. At length, making an effort to regain her composure, “Forgive me, my sister!” said she. “This is very foolish—to weep when I ought to rejoice—and I do rejoice—and I know I shall be so happy yet!” But, in spite of

the faint smile that accompanied her words, tears again burst from her eyes.

"I am sure I shall have infinite pleasure in your society," replied Adelaide, with her usual sweetness and placidity, as she replaced a ringlet in its proper position; "but I have unluckily an engagement at this time. You will, however, be at no loss for amusement: you will find musical instruments there," pointing to an adjacent apartment; "and here are new publications, and *portefeuilles* of drawings you will perhaps like to look over:" and so saying, she disappeared.

"Musical instruments and new publications!" repeated Mary, mechanically, to herself: "what have I to do with them?—O, for one kind word from my mother's lips!—one kind glance from my sister's eye!"

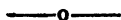
And she remained overwhelmed with the weight of those emotions which, instead of pouring into the hearts of others, she was compelled to concentrate in her own. Her mournful reveries were interrupted by her kind friend Lady Emily; but Mary deemed her sorrow too sacred to be betrayed even to her, and therefore, rallying her spirits, she strove to enter into those schemes of amusement suggested by her cousin for passing the day. But she found herself unable for such continued exertion; and, hearing a large party was expected to dinner, she retired, in spite of Lady Emily's remonstrances, to her own apartment, where she sought a refuge from her thoughts, in writing to her friends at Glenfern.

Lady Juliana looked in upon her as she passed to dinner. She was in a better humour, for she had received a new dress which was particularly becoming, as both her maid and her glass had attested.

Again Mary's heart bounded towards the being to whom she owed her birth; yet, afraid to give utterance to her feelings, she could only regard her with silent

admiration, till a moment's consideration converted that into a less pleasing feeling, as she observed, for the first time, that her mother wore no mourning.

Lady Juliana saw her astonishment, and, little guessing the cause, was flattered by it. "Your style of dress is very obsolete, my dear," said she, as she contrasted the effect of her own figure and her daughter's in a large mirror; "and there's no occasion for you to wear black here. I shall desire my woman to order some things for you; though perhaps there won't be much occasion, as your stay here is to be short; and, of course, you won't think of going out at all. *Apropos*, you will find it dull here by yourself, won't you? I shall leave you my darling Blanche for a companion," kissing a little French lap-dog, as she laid it in Mary's lap; "only you must be very careful of her, and coax her, and be very, very good to her; for I would not have my sweetest Blanche vexed, not for the world!" And, with another long and tender salute to her dog, and a "Good by, my dear!" to her daughter, she quitted her to display her charms to a brilliant drawing-room, leaving Mary to solace herself in her solitary chamber with the whines of a discontented lap-dog.



Chapter xxxij.

C'est un personnage illustre dans son genre, et qui a porté le talent de bien nourrir jusques où il pouvoit aller;—il ne semble né que pour la digestion.—LA BRUYÈRE.

IN every season of life, grief brings its own peculiar antidote along with it. The buoyancy of youth soon repels its deadening weight—the firmness of manhood resists its weakening influence—the torpor of old age is insensible to its most acute pangs.

In spite of the disappointment she had experienced the preceding day, Mary arose the following morning with fresh hopes of happiness springing in her heart.

"How foolish I was," thought she, "to view so seriously what, after all, must be merely difference of manner; and how illiberal to expect every one's manners should accord exactly with my ideas! but, now that I have got over the first impression, I dare say I shall find every body quite amiable and delightful."

And Mary quickly reasoned herself into the belief, that she only could have been to blame. With renovated spirits, she therefore joined her cousin, and accompanied her to the breakfasting saloon. The visitors had all departed, but Dr Redgill had returned, and seemed to be at the winding-up of a solitary but voluminous meal. He was a very tall corpulent man, with a projecting front, large purple nose, and a profusion of chin.

"Good morning, ladies!" mumbled he, with a full mouth, as he made a feint of half-rising from his chair. "Lady Emily, your servant—Miss Douglas, I presume—hem! allow me to pull the bell for your ladyship," as he sat without stirring hand or foot; then after it was done—"pon my honour, Lady Emily, this is not using me well. Why did you not desire me?—and you are so nimble—I defy any man to get the start of you."

"I know you have been upon hard service, doctor, and therefore I humanely wished to spare you any additional fatigue," replied Lady Emily.

"Fatigue! pooh! I'm sure I mind fatigue as little as any man. Besides, it's really nothing to speak of; I have merely rode from my friend Admiral Yellowchops' this morning."

"I hope you passed a pleasant day there yesterday?"

"So so—very so so," returned the doctor, drily.

"Only so so, and a turtle in the case!" exclaimed Lady Emily.

"Pooh!—as to that, the turtle was neither here nor there. I value turtle as little as any man. You may be sure it wasn't for that I went to see my old friend Yellowchops. It happened, indeed, that there *was* a turtle, and a very well-dressed one, too; but where five-and-thirty people (one half of them ladies, who, of course, are always helped first) sit down to dinner, there's an end of all rational happiness, in my opinion."

"But at a turtle feast you have surely something much better. You know you may have rational happiness any day over a beef-steak."

"I beg your pardon—that's not such an easy matter. I can assure you it is a work of no small skill to dress a beef-steak handsomely; and, moreover, to eat it in perfection, a man must eat it by himself. If once you come to exchange words over it, it is useless. I once saw the finest steak I ever clapt my eyes upon completely ruined by one silly scoundrel asking another if he liked fat. If he liked fat!—what a question for one rational being to ask another! The fact is, a beef-steak is like a woman's reputation; if once it is breathed upon, it's good for nothing!"

"One of the stories with which my nurse used to amuse my childhood," said Mary, "was that of having seen an itinerant conjurer dress a beef-steak on his tongue."

The doctor suspended the morsel he was carrying to his mouth, and for the first time regarded Mary with looks of unfeigned admiration.

"'Pon my honour, and that was as clever a trick as ever I heard of! You are a wonderful people, you Scotch—a very wonderful people—but pray, was she at any pains to examine the fellow's tongue?"

"I imagine not," said Mary: "I suppose the love

of science was not strong enough to make her run the risk of burning her fingers."

"It's a thousand pities," said the doctor, as he dropped his chin with an air of disappointment. "I am surprised none of your Scotch *savants* got hold of the fellow, and squeezed the secret out of him. It might have proved an important discovery—a very important discovery;—and your Scotch are not apt to let anything escape them—a very searching shrewd people as ever I knew—and that's the only way to arrive at knowledge. A man must be of a stirring mind if he expects to do good."

"A poor woman below wishes to see you, sir," said a servant.

"These poor women are perfect pests to society," said the doctor, as his nose assumed a still darker hue; "there is no resting upon one's seat for them—always something the matter! They burn, and bruise, and hack themselves and their brats, one would really think, on purpose to give trouble."

"I have not the least doubt of it," said Lady Emily; "they must find your sympathy so soothing."

"As to that, Lady Emily, if you knew as much about poor women as I do, you wouldn't think so much of them as you do. Take my word for it—they are, one and all of them, a very greedy ungrateful set, and require to be kept at a distance."

"And also to be kept waiting. As poor people's time is their only wealth, I observe you generally make them pay a pretty large fee in that way."

"That is not really what I should have expected from you, Lady Emily. I must take the liberty to say, your ladyship does me the greatest injustice. You must be sensible how ready I am to fly," rising as if he had been glued to his chair, "when there is any real danger. I'm sure it was only last week I got up as

soon as I had swallowed my dinner, to see a man who had fallen down in a fit ; and now I am going to this woman, who, I dare say, has nothing the matter with her, before my breakfast is well down my throat."

"Who is that gentleman?" asked Mary, as the doctor at length, with much reluctance, shuffled out of the room.

"He is a sort of medical aid-de-camp of papa's," answered Lady Emily ; "who, for the sake of good-living, has got himself completely domesticated here. He is vulgar, selfish, and *gourmand*, as you must already have discovered ; but these are accounted his greatest perfections, as papa, like all indolent people, must be diverted, and *that* he never is by genteel sensible people. He requires something more *piquant*, and nothing fatigues him so much as the conversation of a common-place sensible man—one who has the skill to keep his foibles out of sight. Now, what delights him in Dr Redgill, there is no *retenu*—any child who runs may read his character at a glance."

"It certainly does not require much penetration," said Mary, "to discover the doctor's master passion : love of ease, and self-indulgence, seem to be the predominant features of his mind ; and he looks as if, when he sat in an arm-chair, with his toes on the fender, and his hands crossed, he would not have an idea beyond 'I wonder what we shall have for dinner to-day.'"

"I'm glad to hear you say so, Miss Douglas," said the doctor, catching the last words as he entered the room, and taking them to be the spontaneous effusions of the speaker's own heart ; "I rejoice to hear you say so. Suppose we send for the bill of fare,"—pulling the bell ; and then to the servant who answered the summons, "Desire Grillade to send up his bill—Miss Douglas wishes to see it."

"Young ladies are much more housewifely in Scot-

land than they are in this country," continued the doctor, seating himself as close as possible to Mary,—“at least they were when I knew Scotland: but that's not yesterday; and it's much changed since then, I dare say. I studied physic in Edinburgh, and went upon a *tour* through the Highlands. I was very much pleased with what I saw, I assure you. Fine country in some respects—Nature has been very liberal.”

Mary's heart leapt within her at hearing her dear native land praised even by Dr Redgill, and her conscience smote her for the harsh and hasty censures she had passed upon him. “One who can admire the scenery of the Highlands,” thought she, “must have a mind. It has always been observed, that only persons of taste were capable of appreciating the peculiar charms of mountain scenery. A London citizen, or a Lincolnshire grazier, sees nothing but deformity in the sublime works of nature;” *ergo*, reasoned Mary, “Dr Redgill must be of a more elevated way of thinking than I had supposed.” The entrance of Lady Juliana prevented her expressing the feelings that were upon her lips; but she thought what pleasure she should have in resuming the delightful theme with the good doctor at another opportunity.

Chapter xxxviii.

Alas! fond child,
How are thy thoughts beguill'd
To hope for honey from a nest of wasps?

QUARLES.

AFTER slightly noticing her daughter, and carefully adjusting her favourites, Lady Juliana began:—

“I am anxious to consult you, Dr Redgill, upon the

state of this young person's health.—You have been excessively ill, my dear, have you not? (My sweetest Blanche, do be quiet!) You had a cough, I think, and every thing that was bad.—And as her friends in Scotland have sent her to me for a short time, entirely on account of her health—(my charming Frisk, your spirits are really too much!)—I think it quite proper that she should be confined to her own apartment during the winter, that she may get quite well and strong against spring. As to visiting, or going into company, that, of course, must be quite out of the question.—You can tell Dr Redgill, my dear, all about your complaints yourself.”

Mary tried to articulate, but her feelings rose almost to suffocation, and the words died upon her lips.

“Your ladyship confounds me,” said the doctor, pulling out his spectacles, which, after duly wiping, he adjusted on his nose, and turned their beams full on Mary's face—“I really never should have guessed there was any thing the matter with the young lady. She does look a *leetle* delicate, to be sure—changing colour, too;—but hand cool—eye clear—pulse steady, a *leetle* impetuous, but that's nothing; and the appetite good. I own I was surprised to see you cut so good a figure at the toast; after the delicious meals you have been accustomed to in the north, you must find it miserable picking here. An English breakfast,” glancing with contempt at the eggs, muffins, toast, preserves, &c. &c. he had collected round him, “is really a most insipid meal: if I did not make a rule of rising early and taking regular exercise, I doubt very much if I should be able to swallow a mouthful—there's nothing to whet the appetite here; and it's the same every where; as Yellowchops says, our breakfasts are a disgrace to England. One would think the whole nation was upon a regimen of tea and toast—from the

Land's End to Berwick-on-Tweed, nothing but tea and toast ! Your ladyship must really acknowledge the prodigious advantage the Scotch possess over us in that respect."

"I thought the breakfasts, like everything else in Scotland, extremely disgusting," replied her ladyship, with indignation.

"Ha ! well, that really amazes me. The people I give up—they are dirty and greedy ; the country, too, is a perfect mass of rubbish ; and the dinners not fit for dogs—the cookery, I mean ; as to the materials, they are admirable. But the breakfasts ! that's what redeems the land—and every country has its own peculiar excellence. In Argyleshire you have the Lochfine herring—fat, luscious, and delicious, just out of the water, falling to pieces with its own richness—melting away like butter in your mouth. In Aberdeenshire you have the Finnan haddo', with a flavour all its own, vastly relishing—just salt enough to be *piquant*, without parching you up with thirst. In Perthshire there is the Tay salmon, kippered, crisp, and juicy—a very magnificent morsel—a *little* heavy, but that's easily counteracted by a tea-spoonful of the Athole whisky. In other places you have the exquisite mutton of the country, made into hams of a most delicate flavour ; flour scones, soft and white ; oat-cake, thin and crisp ; marmalade and jams of every description ; and ——— But I beg pardon !—your ladyship was upon the subject of this young lady's health. 'Pon my honour ! I can see little the matter—we were just going to look over the bill together when your ladyship entered. I see it begins with that eternal *soupe santé*, and that paltry *potage-au-riz*—this is the second day within a week Monsieur Grillade has thought fit to treat us with them ; and it's a fortnight yesterday since I have seen either oyster or turtle soup upon the table. 'Pon my

honour! such inattention is infamous. I know Lord Courtland detests *soupe santé*, or, what's the same thing, he's quite indifferent to it—for I take indifference and dislike to be much the same: a man's indifference to his dinner is a serious thing, and so I shall let Monsieur Grillade know." And the doctor's chin rose and fell like the waves of the sea.

"What is the name of the physician at Bristol, who is so celebrated for consumptive complaints?" asked Lady Juliana of Adelaide. "I shall send for him; he is the only person I have any reliance upon. I know he always recommends confinement for consumption."

Tears dropped from Mary's eyes. Lady Juliana regarded her with surprise and severity.

"How very tiresome! I really can't stand these perpetual *scènes*. Adelaide, my love, pull the bell for my *eau de Cologne*. Dr Redgill, place the screen there. This room is insufferably hot. My dogs will literally be roasted alive!" and her ladyship fretted about in all the perturbation of ill-humour.

"'Pon my honour! I don't think the room hot," said the doctor, who, from a certain want of tact, and opacity of intellect, never comprehended the feelings of others: "I declare I have felt it much hotter when your ladyship has complained of the cold: but there's no accounting for people's feelings. If you would move your seat a *leetle* this way, I think you would be cooler; and as to your daughter"——

"I have repeatedly desired, Dr Redgill, that you will not use these familiar appellations when you address me or any of my family!" interrupted Lady Juliana, with haughty indignation.

"I beg pardon," said the doctor, nowise discomposed at this rebuff.—"Well, with regard to Miss—Miss—this young lady, I assure your ladyship you need be under no apprehensions on her account. She's a *leetle*

nervous, that's all; take her about, by all means—all young ladies love to go about and see sights. Show her the pump-room, and the ball-room, and the shops, and the rope-dancers, and the wild beasts, and there's no fear of her. I never recommend confinement to man, woman, or child. It destroys the appetite—and our appetite is the best part of us. What would we be without appetites? Miserable beings! worse than the beasts of the field!"—And away shuffled the doctor to admonish Monsieur Grillade on the iniquity of neglecting this the noblest attribute of man.

"It appears to me excessively extraordinary," said Lady Juliana, addressing Mary, "that Mrs Douglas should have alarmed me so much about your health, when it seems there's nothing the matter with you. She certainly showed very little regard for my feelings. I can't understand it; and I must say, if you are not ill, I have been most excessively ill-used by your Scotch friends." And, with an air of great indignation, her ladyship swept out of the room, regardless of the state into which she had thrown her daughter.

Poor Mary's feelings were now at their climax, and she gave way to all the repressed agony that swelled her heart. Lady Emily, who had been amusing herself at the other end of the saloon, and had heard nothing of what had passed, flew towards her at sight of her suffering, and eagerly demanded of Adelaide the cause.

"I really don't know," answered Adelaide, lifting her beautiful eyes from her book with the greatest composure; "Lady Juliana is always cross of a morning."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Mary, trying to regain her composure, "the fault is mine. I—I have offended my mother, I know not how. Tell me!—O tell me, how I can obtain her forgiveness?"

"Obtain her forgiveness!" repeated Lady Emily, indignantly, "for what?"

"Alas! I know not, but in some way I have displeased my mother; her looks—her words—her manner—all tell me how dissatisfied she is with me; while to my sister, and even to her very dogs"—— Here Mary's agitation choked her utterance.

"If you expect to be treated like a dog, you will certainly be disappointed," said Lady Emily. "I wonder Mrs Douglas did not warn you of what you had to expect. She must have known something of Lady Juliana's ways, and it would have been as well had you been better prepared to encounter them."

Mary looked hurt, and, making an effort to conquer her emotion, she said, "Mrs Douglas never spoke of my mother with disrespect, but she did warn me against expecting too much from her affection. She said I had been too long estranged from her, to have retained my place in her heart; but still"——

"You could not foresee the reception you have met with? Nor I, neither. Did you, Adelaide?"

"Lady Juliana is sometimes so odd," answered her daughter, in her sweetest tone, "that I really am seldom surprised at anything she does; but all this *fracas* appears to me perfectly absurd, as nobody minds anything she says."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Mary, "my duty must ever be to reverence my mother—my study should be to please to her, if I only knew how; and oh! would she but suffer me to love her!"——

"My dear cousin," said Lady Emily, "you speak a very sweet, but an unknown language here: we none of us make the least pretence to love and reverence each other—quite the reverse, as Adelaide knows: being reasonable people, all we aim at is, to keep from hating and despising one another;—so give me all the love you have brought with you from your warm-hearted highland, and I will keep it till I find some one more

worthy than myself to bestow it upon. As for reverence, truly I cannot, at this moment, recommend any individual in this family to whom I think it is due. But, my dear cousin, do not weep at my nonsense; you will understand us all by-and-by, and find, perhaps, that we are not so very bad as we appear; only we don't yet quite understand each other,—is it not so, Adelaide?"

But Adelaide regarded her sister for a moment with a look of surprise, then rose and left the room, humming an Italian air.

Lady Emily remained with her cousin, but she was a bad comforter; her indignation against the oppressor was always much stronger than her sympathy with the oppressed, and she would have been more in her element scolding the mother than soothing the daughter.

But Mary had not been taught to trust to mortals weak as herself for support in the hour of trial: she knew her aid must come from a higher source, and in solitude she sought for consolation.

"This must be all for my good," sighed she, "else it would not be. I had drawn too bright a picture of happiness—already it is blotted out with my tears. I must set about replacing it with one of soberer colours."

Alas! Mary knew not how many a fair picture of human felicity had shared the same fate as hers!

END OF VOL. I.

TURNBULL AND SPEARS, PRINTERS, EDINBURGH.

